



A RECORD OF Ancient Histories,

Entituled in Latine:

Gesta Romanorum.

Discoursing of sundry Examples, for the advancement of Vertue, and the abandoning of Vice.

Very pleasant in Reading, and profitable in Practise.

LONDON

Printed by *Richard Bishop.*

THE HISTORIE OF *Gesta Romanorum.*

The Argument.

Mans soul is dearly beloved of God her Father. And yet for sundry good graces she is tempted of the devil by three divers means, at three several Ages in this mortal life: if she resist and overcome the same, she is hereby adopted to the fruition of Matrimonial joy in heaven, with Christ the Son of God.

The first History.

SOmetimes there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor, which had a fair creature to his Daughter, named Athalanta, whom divers great Lords, and many noble Knights desired to have to wife. This Athalanta was wondrous swift of foot: wherefore such a Law was made, that no man should have her to wife ex-

kept he could out-run her and take her by swiftness of feet. It befell that many came to run with her, but could not overtake her. At the last there came a Knight named Pomeis, unto her Father, and said to him: My Lord, if it please you to give me your Daughter to wife, I will run with her. Then said her Father, there is a Law made, that whosoever will have her to wife, must first run with her: and if he overtake her not, he shall lose his head, and if he overtake her, then shall I wed her unto him.

And when the Emperor had told him all the peril that might fall in the winning of her, the Knight voluntarily granted for to abide that Jeopardy. Then the Knight provided him three Balls of gold against the running. And when they had begun to run a little space, the young Lady over-run him: then the Knight threw forth before her the first Ball of gold: and when the Damsel saw the Ball, she stooped and took it up, and in the mean while the Knight gat before her, but that availed little: for when she perceived it, she ran so fast, that in short space she gat before him again. And then he threw forth the second Ball of gold, and she stooped as she did before and took

took it up, and in that while the Knight got before her again: which this yong Damsel seing constrained her self, and ran so fast, that she son had him at a vantage again, and was before him: now by that time they were nigh the mark where they should abide, wherefore the Knight threw forth the third Ball before her, and she stoped down to take up the Ball, and while she was taking up the third Ball, the Knight gat before her, and was first at the mark. And thus was she won.

The Morall.

By this Emperor is understood the Father of Heaven, and by the Damsel is understood the Soul of man with whom many Devils desire to run, and to deceive her through their temptations, but she withstandeth them mightily, and overcommeth them. And when he hath done his worst, and may not speed, then makes he three Balls of Gold, and casteth them before her in the three Ages of man, that is to say, in Youth, in Manhood, and in old Age. In Youth the Devil casteth the Ball of Lechery before her, that is to say, the desire of the flesh: nevertheless for all this Ball, oftentimes man overcom-

meth the Devil, by acknowledging of his sins to God, by hearty repentance and amendment of life. The second Ball is the Ball of Pride, the which the Devil casteth to man in his Manhood, that is to say, in his middle age: but this Ball man oft-times overcommeth as he did the first, but let him beware of the third Ball which is Coveteousness, that the Devil casteth to man in his old Age, which is dreadfull: for except a man may overcome this Ball, with the other two, he shall lose his Honour, that is to say, the Kingdom of Heaven. For when a man burneth in Coveteousness, he thinketh not on ghostly Riches (for ever his heart is set on worldly goods) and reckoneth not of Prayers, nor of well-doing: and thus loseth he his heritage, to the which God hath bought him with his precious blood: Unto the which our Lord Jesus Christ bring us all.

The Argument.

As God allotteth divers men divers callings and estates of living in this world, so is every man tried by the rule of life and doctrine, whether his practise agree with his profession, in profiting himself without prejudice

to others, wherein if he so hold himselfe content, for such a Son the heavenly Father hath planted a Tree of heavenly Treasure in the Life that shall be everlasting.

The second History.

THere reigned somtime in Rome a wise and mighty Emperor, named Anselm, who did bear in his Armes, a Shield of Silber with five red Roses. This Emperor had three Sons, whom hée loved much: hée had also continuall war with the King of Egypt, in which war hée lost all his temporall goods, except a precious Tréé. It fortuned after on a day that hée gave battell to the same King of Egypt, wherein hée was grievously wounded, nevertheleſſe hée obtained the victory, notwithstanding hée had his deadly wound: wherefore while hée lay at point of death, hée called unto him his eldest Son, and sayd: My dear and welbelobed Son, all my temporall Riches are spent, and almost nothing is left me, but a precious Tréé, the which standeth in the midst of my Empire: I give to thée all that is under the earth and above the earth of the same Tréé. O my reverend Father (quoth hée) I thank you much.

Then

Then ſaid the Emperor, call to mée my ſecond Sonne. Anon the eldeſt Sonne greatly ioying of his fathers gift, called in his brother. And when hee came the Emperor ſaid: My dear Son, I may not make my Teſtament, for as much as I have ſpent all my goods except a Tree which ſtandeth in ỹ midſt of mine Empire, of the which Tree, I bequeath to thée, all that is great and ſmall. Then anſwered hée and ſaid: My reverend Father, I thanke you much. Then ſaid the Emperor, call to mée my third Sonne, and ſo it was done. And when he was come, the Emperor ſaid: My deare Sonne, I muſt dye of theſe wounds, and I have only a precious Tree, of which I have given thy Brethren their portion, and to thee I bequeath thy portion: for I wil that thou have of the ſaid Tree all that is wet and dry. Then ſaid his Sonne: Father I thank you. Soone after the Emperor had made this bequeſt, hée died. And ſhortly after the eldeſt Son took poſſeſſion of the Tree. Now when the ſecond Sonne heard this, he came to him, ſaying: My Brother, by what Law or Title occupie you this Tree? Dear brother quoth he; I occupie it by this title, my father gave me all that is

under

under the earth and above, of the said Tree, by reason therefore the Tree is mine. Unknowing to thee, quoth the second brother, hee gave unto me all that is great and small of the said Tree, and therefore I have as great right in the Tree as you. This hearing the third Son, hee came to them and said, My wellbeloved Brethren, it behoveth you not to strive for this Tree for I have as much right in this Tree as yee: for by the law, ye wot, the last Will and Testament ought to stand: for of truth hee gave mee of the said Tree all that is wet and dry, and therefore the Tree by right is mine: but for as much as your words are of great force and mine also, my counsell is that wee bee iudged by reason: for it is not good nor commendable that strife or dissencion should bee among us. Here beside dwelleth a King ful of reason, therfore to avoid strife let us goe to him, and each of us lay his right before him, and as he shall iudge, let us stand to his iudgement: then said his Brethren, thy counsell is good, wherfore they went all three unto the King of Reason, and each of them severally shewed forth his right unto him, as it is said before.

When the King had heard the Titles,

he

he rehersed them all again severally, first saying to the eldest Sonne, thus: You say (quoth the King) that your father gave you all that is under the earth, and abode the earth of the said Tree. And to the second Brother hee bequeathed all that is great and small of that Tree. And to the third Brother hee gave all that is wet and dry.

And with that hee layd the Law to them, and sayd, that this Will ought to stand.

Now my dear friends, briefly I shall satisfy all your requests: and when hee had thus sayd, hee turned him unto the eldest Brother, saying: My dear friend if you like to abide the Judgement of Right, it behoveth you to be letten blood of the right Arm. My Lord (quoth hee) your will shall be done. Then the King called for a discreet Physician, commanding him to let him blood.

When the eldest son was thus letten blood, the King sayd to them all three: My dear friends, where is your father buryed? Then answered they and sayd: forsooth my Lord, in such a place. Anon the King commanded to dig in the ground for the body, and to take a bone out of his brest, and to bury the body again:

again: and so it was done. And when the bone was taken out, the King commanded that it should bee laid in the blood of the elder Brother, and it should lye till it had received kindly the blood and then to bée laid in the Sunn and dryed, and after that, it should bée washt with cleare water: his servants fulfilled all that he had commanded: and when they began to wash, the blood vanished clean away. When the King saw this, he said to the second Sonne, it behoveth that thou bée letten blood as thy Brother was. Then said hee, My Lord, your will shall be fulfilled, and anon he was done unto like as his Brother was in all things, and when they began to wash the bone, the blood vanished away. Then said the King to the third Sonn, it behoveth thee to bée letten blood likewise. He answered and said, My Lord it pleaseth mée well so to bee. When the yongest Brother was letten blood, and done unto in all things as his two Brethren were before, then the Kings servants began to wash the bone, but neither for washing nor rubing might they doe away the blood off the bone, but it ever appeared bloudy. When the King saw this, hee said: It appeareth openly now that this blood, is of the nature

of

of the bone, thou art his true Son, and theſe other two bee Baſtards, I iudg thee the Tree for ever-more.

The Morall.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which bare a Shield of ſilver, with five red Roſes, that is, his body that was ſo faire, ſo cleare, and more radiant then any ſilver, according to the Pſalmiſt: Speciosus forma præ filiis hominum, that is, hee was more faire of ſhape then all the children of men. By the five Roſes we underſtand his five Wounds, which hee ſuffered for mankinde. And by the King of Egypt wee underſtand the Diuill, againſt whom hee fought all the time of his life, and at the laſt hee was ſlaine for mankinde. Neuertheleſſe before his death, hee made his Teſtament to his three Sonnes.

By the firſt, to whom hee gaue of the Tree, all that was under the earth and above the earth, wee underſtand ſuch mighty men, and others of all eſtates in this world, as are not content with their calling, ſeek ambitiouſly the ſubuerſion of others, to magnifie and exalt themſelues. By the ſecond Son, to whom hee gaue all of the Tree that

was

was great and small, wee understand such worldly wisely men in this world, which in their subtilty attempt to win or to lose all. By the third Sonne, to whom he gave all that was wet and dry of the Tree, we understand every good Christian Prince, Noble man, Magistrate, or meaner person in every Common-wealth whersoever, which (eschewing all ambition & covetousnes) holding himselfe content with the Providence of God, and in his own calling laboureth truly to do good unto all men; yea though himselfe sustain injuries, suffering now solace, then care: now riches, then poverty: yet receiveth all this thankfully to have this precious Tree, thus bequeathed unto them. This Tree is the Tree of Paradise, that is, everlasting Joy, which is given to us all if wee take it thankfully. This every man obtaineth not, therefore it behoveth them to go to the King of Reason that is, unto the Father of heaven who knoweth all things. The first Sonne was let blood, and in his blood the bone was laid. By this bone wee shall understand our strong faith in Christs merits, and by the blood, the lively and fruitfull sap of good works proceeding out of the same, which are rare things

to

to bée found in those that séek their own priuat gaine, who when they are let bloud by the sharp Lance of Gods Iustice, and it bée stablished with Diuine Predication, and made dry with the Sunn of outward Profession, yet being washt with the water of swelling Pride, Malice, Envy, and such like, then the faith in Christs merits, is as though wée had not receiued it, and the liuely and fruitfull sap of good workes hath no power to tarry upon it, but banisheth away. And thus fared it with these other two, the first and second Sons: but the third Son being contrary unto the other in profession and practis of life and maners, bée hée Magistrate or mean person, the bone of such a person will euer bée firme of faith, in himselfe and towards others. From such a mans bone the bloud of liuely fruits (to himself and all others profitable) will neuer bée washed away with the water of wretchednes. But the more it is dried in the Sun of true triall, the better it is. Such are the true children of God, of whom our Lord speaketh thus; yee which haue forsaken all things for me, that is, yée that haue forsaken the way of sinne, shall receiue an hundred times more, that is, ye shall not only re-

ceiue

ceive the tree of Paradise, but also the heritage of heaven. These other two are Bastards, because what they promised in their Baptism, they wrought all the contrary, through their wicked living. And therefore he that desireth to obtain the joyes of heaven, must abide stedfastly in the profession and practise of good life and manners, and then by Christ he shall obtain the Tree of Paradise. Unto which he bring us, who liveth and reigneth for ever. Amen.

The Argument.

God so loved sinful man, that he sent his onely begotten Son to redeem him out of the captivity of the world, to rest with him in the joyes of heaven.

The third History.

IN Rome there dwelt some time a noble Emperor named Diocletian, who loved exceedingly the vertue of Chazity. Wherefore he desired greatly to know what Fowl loved her yong best, to the intent that he might thereby grow to more perfect Charity. It fortuned upon a day, that the Emperor rode to a Forrest to take his disport, whereas he found the nest of a great Bird (called in Latine

Struchio Cameli, in Engliſh an Oſtridge) with her yong, the which yong Bird the Emperor took with him, and cloſed her in a veſſel of Glaſs. The Dam of this little Bird followed unto the Emperors Pallace, and flew into the Hall where her yong one was. But when ſhe ſaw her yong one, & could not come to her, nor get her out, ſhe returned again to the Foreſt, and abode there three days, and at the laſt ſhe came again to the Pallace, bearing in her mouth a Worm called Thumare: and when ſhe came where her yong one was, ſhe let the Worm fall upon the Glaſs, by vertue of which Worm the Glaſs brake, & the yong one flew forth with her Dam. When the Emperor ſaw this, he praiſed much the Dam of the Bird which laboured ſo diligently to deliver her yong one.

The Morall

Dear Friends, this Emperor is the Father of Heaven, which greatly loveth them that live in perfect love and Charity: This little Bird taken from the Foreſt, and cloſed in the Glaſs, was Adam our Forefather, which was exiled out of Paradiſe, and put into the Glaſs, that is, Hell. This hearing the

Dam

Dam of the Bird, that is, the Son of God, he descended from Heaven, unto the Forrest of the World, and lived there three days, bearing with him a Worm, that is, Manhood, according to the Psalmist, I am a worm and no man. This man was slain among the Jews, of whose blood the vessel eternal was broken, and the Bird went out, that is, Adam went forth with his Dam the Son of God, and flew to Heaven.

The Argument.

A clean spirit and undefiled soul is the Daughter of God, so dear unto him that he bestows her not upon the rich man wanting wisdom, but upon the poor man that is wise and liveth in his fear, which if she have at any time transgrest by frailty of flesh, then seeketh shee for recovery of her health by the medicine of amendment of life: such a soul shall be espoused to Christ, and live with him in the world to come everlastingly.

The fourth History.

SOmetime reigned in Rome a worthy Emperor and a wife, which had a

faire daughter and gracious in the ſight of every man. This Emperour bethought him on a day, to whom hée might give his daughter in marriage, reaſoning thus: If I give my daughter to a rich man, and hée bée a fole, then is ſhe loſt, but if I give her to a poore and a wiſe man, then may he get his liveing by his wiſdome.

There was at that time dwelling in the City of Rome, a Philoſopher named Socrates, poor, but wiſe, which came to the Emperor and ſaid: My Lord, be not diſpleaſed though I put forth my petition before your Highneſſe. The Emperor ſaid, ſpeake on: Then ſaid Socrates: My Lord, yée have a daughter whom I deſire above all things. The Emperor anſwered and ſaid: My friend I ſhall give thée my daughter to wife on this condition, that if ſhe die in thy fellowſhip after that ſhe is eſpouſed to thée, thou ſhalt without doubt loſe thy head. Then ſaid Socrates, upon this condition I will gladly take her to my wife. The Emperor hearing this, called all the Lords and States of his Empire, & made a great feaſt at their wedding. And after the feaſt Socrates led home his wife to his own houſe, where they lived in peace and health long time.

But

But at the last this Emperors daughter sickned to death almost. When Socrates perceived this, he said to himselfe, Alas and woe is mée, what shall I doo, and whither shall I flée, if the Emperors daughter that is my wife should die: And for sorrow this Socrates went to a Forrest there beside and wept bitterly.

Then while he thus wept and mourned, there came an aged man having a staffe in his hand, and asked him why hée mourned. Socrates answered and sayd: I espoused the Emperors daughter upon this condition, that if shée die in my fellowship, I should lose my life: now shée is sickned to death almost, and I can find no remedy nor help, and therfore I mourn.

Then said the old man: Bée of good comfort, for I shall help you if ye will doe after my counsell. In this Forrest bée three Yearbs, if you make a drink of the first for your wife, and of the other two a plaister, and if yée use this medicinall drink and plaister in due time, without doubt shée shall recover her perfect health. Socrates did all that the old man had taught him. And when his wife had used awhile that medicinall drink and plaister, within short time shée was perfectly whole of all

her ſickneſs. And when the Emperor heard that Socrates had ſo recovered his wife, he promoted him to great honour.

The Morall.

Dear Friends, the Emperor is our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, his Daughter ſo fair and ſo gracious is the ſoul, made to the ſimilitude of God, which is full glorious in the ſight of him and of his Angels, while that ſhe is not defiled, but abideth in her own proper cleanneſs. This ſoul God would not give it to a rich man, but to a poor, that is, a man that is made of the ſlime of the earth.

This Socrates is a poor man, for why? every man commeth poor and naked into this world from his mothers belly, and every man takes his ſoul in wedlock upon ſuch condition, that if the dye in his fellowſhip by deadly ſin, without doubt he ſhall loſe eternal life. Therefore O thou man, if thy wife ſicken through frailty of fleſh, unto ſin, do then as Socrates did, go unto the Forreſt, that is, the Church of Chriſt, and thou ſhalt find there an old man with a ſtaffe, that is, a diſcréet Preacher, which ſhall miniſter unto thee theſe three herbs, whereof may be confected the medicine of thy recovery unto

health.

health. The first Herb is acknowledging of Sin: the second is Repentance: and the third is, newness of Life according to the Will of God: If these herbs be used in a Plaister, the sinner without doubt shall receive his health, and his soul shall be delivered from sin, and assuredly he shall have everlasting life. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Argument.

Many foolish Idiots of the world, which flow in abundance of the worldly wealth and pomp, thinking they shall live here always, are laboured unto, by the Preachers of Gods Word, and admonished of their momentary felicities, and to prepare themselves in bestowing well their short time here, to enjoy the blessings of everlasting felicity in the world to come.

The fifth History.

SOmetime there reigned in Rome a mighty Emperor and a wise, named Frederick, who had one onely Son, whom he loved much. This Emperor when he lay at point of death, called unto

him his ſonne, and ſaid: Deare ſonne, I have a Ball of gold, which I charg thée on my bleſſeing that thou anon after my death ſhalt give to the verieſt fool thou canſt finde. Then ſaid his ſon: My Lord, without doubt your will ſhall be fulfilled. Anon this yong Lord, after the death of his Father, went and ſought many Realmes, and found many wretches fooles, but becauſe hee would perform his fathers will, hee ſought till hee came to Realm where the law was ſuch, that every yeare a new King was choſen: who had the ruling of the Realm for one yeare only, and at the yeares end hee was depoſed, and exiled into an Iland, where hee finiſhed his life in miſery. When the Emperors ſonne came to this Realme, the new King was choſen with great honor, and brought unto his Regall ſeat with much muſick and great reverence. And when the Emperors ſon ſaw that, hee came unto him, and ſaluted him reverendly, ſaying: My Lord, loe I give you this Ball of gold on my fathers behalf. Then ſaid hee: I pray thee tell mee the cauſe why thou giveſt mee this Ball. Then anſwered he, and ſaid: My father charged me on his death bed, that I ſhould give this Ball to the moſt

foole

fole that I could finde: wherefore I have sought many Realms, and have found many fols, but a more fole then thou I never found: for it is not unknown to thee that thou shalt reign but a year. and at the years end thou shalt be exiled into such a place whereas thou shalt die a miserable death, wherefore I hold thee for the most fole that ever I found, for as much as for the Lordship of a year thou wilt so wilfully lose thy self: and therefore I give thee this Ball. Then said the King, without doubt thou saiest truly, and therefore while I am now in full power of this Realm, I will send before me great treasure, wherewith I may sustain my self from a miserable death, when I shall be exiled and put down. And so this was done: and at the years end when hee was exiled, he lived there in peace and quietnes, and afterward died a good death.

The Morall.

Dear friends, this Emperor is the Father of Heaven, the which bequeathed the Ball, that is, worldly riches to Fooles and Idiots, who savour nothing but that is earthly. This Emperors Son is a Preacher or discreet Minister, that

that trabelleth about to many Realms and Lands, to ſhew unbelieving men and fools their peril. The Realm wherein no King might reign but a year, is the world. For who ſo liveth an hundred years, when he dieth he ſhall ſeem to have lived but the ſpace of an year: therefore do as the King did while ye be in power of life, ſend before you your treaſure, that is, firm Faith in Chriſts merits, and the fruits of Gods Word proceeding from the ſame. Then certainly when we be exiled out of this world, we ſhall live in peace, and ſhall find the mercy of God plentifully, wherby we ſhall obtain eternall life. Unto which bring us he that for us ſhed his precious blood.

The Argument

The evil diſpoſed men of this world are here advertiſed of their greedy griping after the ſweet temptations of the devil, wherein ſuch do rejoyce til death commeth ſuddenly upon them, and then they fall into the horrible pit of deſolate darkneſs due to their deſerts.

The ſixth Hiſtory.

Diocleſian raigned in the City of Rome, in whoſe Empire dwelt a noble

noble Philosopher, who by his Art set up an Image in the middest of the City of Rome, which Image stretched out his arm, and his formost finger, whereupon stood this Posey written in Latine: Percute hic, Strike here. This Image after the death of the Philosopher, stood along time, and many great Clarks came for to read the superscription that was on the finger, but none understood it; wherefore the people wondred much. At last, a long time after, there came a strange Clark out of a far Country, and when he saw the Image he read the superscription, Strike here. And then upon a day when he saw the shadow of the hand, he took a Mattock, and broke up the ground under the hand where the shadow was, according to the understanding of the superscription, and anon he found an house all of Marble underneath the ground, wherein he found so much Riches, so many Jewels, and so great Marvels, as he never saw before. And at last he saw a Table ready covered, and all manner of things necessary thereto set thereupon. He further beheld, and saw a Carbuncle in the Hall that lighted all the House. And against this Carbuncle on the other side, stood a man holding a bow in his hand,

and

and an arrow ready to ſhot. The Clark marvelled much when hee ſaw all theſe things, and thought with himſelfe, that I tell this forth, there will no man believe mée, and therefore I will have ſomwhat of theſe goods in token thereof. And with that hée ſaw a knife of Gold upon the Table, the which hée took, and would have put in his boſom, but then the Archer ſmot the Carbunkle and brake it, whereby the whole Houſe was ſhadowed and made dark, and when the Clark perceived it hée wept moſt bitterly, for hée knew no way to get out, for as much as the Houſe was made dark through the breaking of the Carbunkle. And that darkneſſe abode there for ever after. And ſo finiſhed the Clark his life there in that darkneſſe.

The Morall.

Dear friends, this Image thus ſtanding betokens the Devill, which ſayth evermore, Strike here, that is, ſeek after worldly Riches, and not for heavenly Treaſure. This Clark that digged with the Mattock, doth betoken the worldly wiſe men of this World, as evill diſpoſed Pleaders of the Law, crafty Attorneys, and other wicked worldlings, that be ever ſmiting, what

by

by right, and what by wrong, so that they may get the vanities of the world: and in their smiting they find great wonders, that is, they finde therein the delights of this world, wherein many men reioyce. The Carbunkle that giveth light is the youth of man, which giveth hardinesse to take their pleasure in worldly riches. The Archer with his arrow is Death, which layes watch against man, to slay him. The Clark that take up the knife, betokeneth every worldly man, that coveteth ever to have all things at his will. Till Death smiteth the Carbuncle, that is, the youth, strength, and power of man, and then lyeth he wrapped in the darknesse of sinne, in which darknesse ofttentimes he dyeth. Therefore studdy we to flye the world and her vaine delightes, and then we shall be sure to winn everlasting life, unto which Christ Jesus bring us all. Amen

The Argument.

Wee are here generally put in minde, that the devill besieging the world, our champion Christ Jesus is ready to take our quarrell into his owne hand, who defending and saveing us from the invasion and circumven-

tion

vention of Satan, is yet accurſed for
as a tranſgreſſor, and is content
ſuffer death for our full juſtification.

The ſeventh Hiſtory.

IN Rome dwelt ſometime a migh
Emperor named Titus, who ordain
in his dayes ſuch a Law, that wh
Knight dyed in his Empire ſhould
buried in his Armour, and whoſoeve
preſumed to ſpoyle any Knight of h
Armour after he was dead, ſhould dy
without any gainſaying. It befell afte
few years that a City of the Empir
was beſieged of the Emperors enemies
and was in danger of loſing, for non
that were in the City could defend them
ſelves by any manner of policie, where
fore great ſorrow and lamentation wa
made throughout the City.

But at laſt, within few days, ther
came to the City a yong Knight, wel
favoured, and valiant in feats of arms
whom the worthy men of the City be
holding and underſtanding his prowes
cryed to him with one voyce: O tho
moſt noble Knight, we beſeech thee to he
us now at our moſt neede, for you ma
ſee this City is like to be loſt. Then h
anſwered and ſaid: Sirs, ye ſee I hav
n

no Armour, but if I had, I would defend your City.

This hearing a mighty man of the City, he said to him secretly, Sir, here lived sometime a valiant Knight, who now is dead and buried within the City, and if it please you to take his Armour, ye may defend this City, and deliver us from peril, and that will be honour unto you, and profit unto the City.

The yong Knight hearing this, went to the Grave and arrayed himselfe with the Armour: and after much fight obtained the victory and delivered the City. Which done, he laid the Armour again in the Grave. But there were some men of the City who envied him because he had obtained the victory, and accused him to the Judge, saying thus: Sir, a Law was made by the Emperor, that whosoever dispoyled any dead Knight of his Armour should dye. This yong Knight found a dead Knight, and took away his Armour, therefore I beseech thee, that thou proceed in the Law against him with Equitie and Justice, in giving him severe punishment for so offending the Law. When the Judge heard this, he made the Knight to be taken: and when he was examined of this his trespass

against

against the Law, he said thus: Sir, it is written in the Law, that of two harms the least is to be chosen. It is not unknown to you that this City was in peril to be lost, and had I not taken this Armour, I had neither saved you nor the City, therefore methinks you ought rather to honour me for this good deed that I have done, then thus shamefully to reprove me: for I am led as he that is ready to be hanged. Also good Sirs, another thing I may alledge for my excuse: he that stealeth or robbeth violently, purposeth not to restore the thing which he stealeth, but it is not thus with me, for though I took the Armour of the dead Knight for your defence and safegard, when I had obtained the victory, I bare it again to the same place, and to the dead Knight whose it is by the Law.

Then said the Justice, a Theef that breaketh a house that he may steal and bear away such as he can finde, although he bring again that he hath taken, I ask of thee if that the breaking of the house be lawful or not? The Knight answered, sometime the breaking of the house may be good, whereas it is made in a feeble place, which would cause the Master of the house

house to make his wall stronger, that the theeves after breake not by force the wals so lightly, for avoyding of more harm.

Then said the Judge, if the breaking of the house be good, nevertheless in that breaking violence is done to ỹ Lord of the house. And so, though thou didst restore the Armour of the dead Knight, nevertheless thou didst wrong to ỹ dead Knight in taking away his Armour. The Knight said, I have told you, that of two harmes the least is to be chosen: and that harm where through great goodnesse cometh ought not to be called harm, but it should rather bee called good. For if an house within the City were on fire, and began to burn, it were better that three or foure houses thereby should be thrown to the ground, then that they should bee set on fire also, whereby all the City should be burned: right so if the Armour of the dead Knight had not been taken, the City had been lost.

And when the Judge heard that he answered so well & so reasonably, he could give no iudgement against him. But they who had accused this Knight, slew him: for whose death there was great weeping throughout all the City, and his body was honourably buried in a new Tomb.

The Moral.

Deare Friends, this Emperor i
the Father of Heaven, and this City i
the world, which is beſieged of the Di
vell and deadly Sin, and as many a
were within the City, were all in pe
rill to be loſt. This young Knight tha
came to the City, is our Lord Jeſu
Chriſt, who had not the armour of hu
manity, till he went to the Grave, tha
is, the wombe of the glorious Virgi
Mary, by ỹ Annunciation of the Angel
ſaying: The holy Ghoſt ſhall light o
thee, &c. Loe, thou ſhalt conceive, an
beare a Son. And thus in the Wom
of the Virgin he tok the armour of th
dead Knight, that is, ỹ man hod of Ad
dam our forefather, and ſaved the City
that is the World and mankind, by hi
bleſſed Paſſion that he ſuffered on th
Croſſe: and he put the Armour aga
into the Grave, when his bleſſed Bod
was buried, but the Citizins envied hi
that is the Jewes accuſed him to Pilat
ſaying: If thou ſuffer him thus thou ar
not Cæſars friend: wee have a Law,
and after the Law he ought to dy,
Iohn 19. 12. And thus our Lord Jeſu
Chriſt of his Enemies was condemn
ed to the death of the Croſſe, and af
ter

ter ascended up to Heaven, whither he bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

The fornication of wicked worldly men is here detected. By the Providence of God and by his gracious favour the sinner is delivered out of the thraldome of sinne, unto the libertie of life everlasting.

The eighth History.

THere raigned somtime in Rome a mighty Emperor and a wise, named Berold, who ordained a Law, that what woman was taken in adultery, her husband being alive, she should be cast into perpetuall Prison. There was that time a Knight that had a faire Lady to his wife, who committed adultery her husband being alive, & was with childe, therefore by the Law she was put in Prison, where in short time she was delivered of a faire Son. The Childe grew up till hee was seven years old, and his mother daily wept bitterly: which when the Childe heard, hee said to her O Mother, why weepe ye thus? for what cause are you thus perplexed: Then said his Mother: O my sweet Son, I have great cause to mourne,

and thou also, for above our heads are people walking, and the Sunne shineth in clearnesse, and we be here continually in such darknesse, that I can neither sée thée, nor thou me, Alas that ever I conceived thée. Then said the Son, such ioy as you speake of I never saw, for I was borne here in this darknesse, therefore if I had meat and drink enough I would live here all my life: therefore Mother weepe not, but bee chearfull. This lamentation that was betweén the Mother and the Sonne the Emperors Steward heard, that stood above their heads, whereof he had great compassion and went to the Emperor, and kneeling besought him of his Grace, that the Mother and the sonne might be delivered out of Prison. The Emperor as a merciful Lord ganted that they should be delivered. Nevertheleslle, if they trespassed so in time to come, they should be punished with double pain. And after she was delivered she lived ioyfully.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor is the father of heaven that made this Law that what married woman, ỳ is, what soul that is espoused to the Lord, & doth

Comm

commit adultery, that is, doth worship strange Gods, should be cast into the prison of hell, therefore the sinful soul hath great cause to weepe, for she is debarred from light, ỳ is, from the ioyes of Heaven. Her Son that desired meat and drinke, are the wealthy wicked Worldlings, that say to the Preachers that preach unto them the ioyes of Heaven, that while we may live & have all the solace of the world we desire no other heaven. The steward ỳ heard their lamentation is ỳ Lord Jesus, who knowing all the privities of our sorrowfull & repentant hearts for our sins besought the Father of Heaven for us, that we might be delivered from the prison of sin, and so come to everlasting life. Unto which he bring us all, Amen.

The Argument.

Christ proclaimeth the joyfull feast of heaven, whereto the lame, that is, the poore Preachers of the Gospel, haveing their sight or knowledge in Gods word supported by the blinde Laytie, and each mutually comforting other, they approach unto the proclaimed feast of perpetual felicitie.

The ninth History

SOmetime in Rome dwelt an Emperor named Pompey, who above all other things was merciful. This Emperor proclaymed throughout all his Empire a great Feast, and that poore and rich should come to the feast: and whosoever came to that feast should not onely be well fed, but also he should have great gifts.

When the Herauld had warned all manner of men to come to this feast, at that time there were two poore men lying by the way, the one being lame, and the other blind. Alas, said the one of these men to the other, woe to us both, how shall we do? for the Emperour hath proclaimed a feast, and whosoever commeth thither, shall not only be well fed, but also shall have great gifts, & I am blind, and thou art lame, how shall we do? Then said the lame man to the blinde man, I shall give thée good counsel, if thou wilt do after me, I am lame and féeble, & may not goe, nevertheless I can sée, and thou art blind but strong: take thou me upon thy back and beare me, and I shall direct thée the right way, and thus we shall both come to the Emperours feast. Then said the blinde man, let it be so, get thou on my back

back, and I shall beare thée, and guide thou me, and so they did, and came both to the feast, and received great rewards and after ended their lives in peace.

The Morall.

Dear Friends, this Emperor is our Saviour Jesus Christ, that proclaimeth a Feast, that is the joyes of heaven unto the which joyes he calleth all Mankinde, and forsaketh no man that will come unto him. This lame man betokeneth the poore Ministers of the Gospell, which wanting worldly wealth, live by the Providence of God. And this blinde man betokeneth ỳ Lay-men who know not the right way to heaven. It behoveth the blind man, that is, the Lay-men to beare the lame man, that is, the Ministers of the Gospel, sustaining and feeding them with the duties of the Church: and the Ministers in Gods sayle are bound to teach and to informe us in the way to Heaven, whereas we shall not onely have a feast, but also great reward and joy. Unto which God bring us all. Amen.

The Argument

Heaven and Hell are here compared to

two Cities, to theſe Cities are two contrary wayes: to Heaven (which is the City of all heavenly treaſure and felicity) is a narrow, crooked craggy and painful way, having three enemies, the Divel, the World, and the Fleſh. To Hell (being the City or ſink of ſorrow and ſadneſſe) a fair way, broad, plain, and eaſie, having three guides, that is, Pride of life, Covetouſneſs of the eyes, and Concupiſcence of the fleſh.

The tenth Hiſtory.

SOmetime in Rome dwelt an Emperor named Folliculus, who was very wiſe & merciful in all his workes. This Emperor builded in the Eaſt a Noble City, wherein he put all his treaſure to be kept. Unto this City the way was ſtony, full of Brambles and ſharp Thornes, and three Knights were armed ready to fight with them that would come to that City. Therefore the Emperor ordained that whoſoever overcame theſe Knights ſhould enter the City, and take at his will of the Emperors treaſure. After that, this Emperour did make in the North a City, wherein hee ordained all manner of paine, ſorrow, and tormenting for male-

factors,

factors, to which was a broad way very delectable, growing full of Roses and fair Lilies, and in their way were three Knights ever waiting, if any man came towards the City of the North, to serve him with all manner of delicates and necessary provision. And if it fortuned that any man did enter within that City, the custome was such, that the people would binde him hand and foote, and cast him into prison, there to abide the sentence of the Judge.

When this was cryed throughout all the Empire, there were two Knights dwelling in one City, one named Jonathas, who was a wise man, the other called Pirrhus, who was a Fool, nevertheless there had continued between them great love. This Jonathas, said to Pirrhus, dear friend, there is a common cry made throughout all Lands that the Emperor hath made a City in the East; wherein he hath put his treasure, and whosoever may enter that City, shall take what hee will of the treasure, therefore let us goe thither. Then said Pirrhus thy Counsel is good, let us go. The wise Knight said, if it be so that thou wilt follow my counsel, I pray thee that faithfull friendship may

continue

continue betweene us, and in token of loue thou ſhalt drinke my bloud, and I will drinke thine, on this condition, that neither of us leaue other in this iourny. The foliſh Knight ſaid, it pleaſeth me right well, wherefore they were both let blood, and each of them dranke others blood. When this was done, they went forth together on their iourney & when they had gon three dayes iourney toward the City where their treaſure was, they came to a place where were two wayes, one ſharp and ſtony & full of thornes, the other fair & plain and full of delights. Then ſaid the wiſe Knight to his fellow: deare Friend, here are two wayes, one ſharp & thorny, neuertheleſſe if we goe this way, we ſhall come to the City that is ſo rich and there we ſhall haue that we deſire. Then ſaid the foliſh Knight to his fellow, I wonder greatly at you, that you will ſpeake ſuch things, for I will rather beléeue mine eyes then your words. I ſée here openly, and ſo doe you, that here is a hard way and full of thornes, and as I haue heard there bee three Champions armed in this way ready to fight againſt all men that goe towards the City of the Eaſt, and therefore I will not goe that way,

but

but here is (as you may see) another way, plain, and easi to walke in, and in this way there are three Knights ready to serve us, and give us all manner of things delightfull for us: and therefore by this way will I goe, and not by that other way. Then said the wise Knight certainly if wee goe by that way, we shall bee led into the City of the Lord, wherein there is no mercy, but perpetuall paine and sorrow, and there wee shall be taken and bound and cast into prison. Certainely said the foolish Knight, this way is the ready way, and as I believe it is more profitable then the other way. Then went they both forth the fair way, and anon three knights met with them, which received them courteously for one night, and gave them all manner of things that were pleasant to them. And on ỹ morrow they took their iourny forth toward the City, & when they were within the City, anon ỹ Emperors officers met with them, & said Friends, why came ye hither, insomuch that ye knew the law of this City is so cruel of long time heretofore: surely yee shall bee served now after the law. Anon they toke the wise knight, and brought him, and put him into prison and after that they tooke the foolish

Knight

Knight, and bound him fast, and cast him into a Ditch. Soon after it befell that the Judge came to the City to give judgement on them that had trespassed the law, and amon all the prisoners were brought forth before the Judge, among whom these two Knights were brought forth, one from prison, and the other from the ditch. Then said the wise Knight to the Judge: My reverend Lord, I complaine of my fellow that is guilty of my death: for when we two came to the two ways, whereof the one led to the City of the East, and the other to this City, I told him all the perill of this City, and the reward of that other City, but he would not beleeve me but said to me in this wise: I will beleeve mine owne eyes better then thy words, and because he was my fellow I would not let him goe alone in this way: and thus came I with him, wherefore he is the cause of my death. Then said the foolish Knight, I complain that he is the cause of my death: for it is not unknown to you all, that I am a Foole and hee a wise man, and therefor, hee should not so lightly have followed my folly, for if he had forsaken this way, I should have followed him, and therefore he is cause of my death. Then said the

Judge

Judge to the wise Knight, because that thou with all thy wisdom, so lightly consentedst and followedst the will of the fole, and his foolish workes: and thou Foole because thou didst reiect the good counsel, and advice of the wise, and wouldest not beleeve him, I give Judgment, that ye both be hanged for your trespasse: and so it was done. Wherefore all men praised greatly the Judge for his discreet iudgement.

The Morall.

Dear Friends, this Emperor is Almighty God, and in the East is the City of Heaven, wherein is treasure infinite: And unto this City is a hard way and full of Thornes, that is, the way of Repentance, by which way ful few walk: for it is hard and straight, according to the holy Scripture, saying thus: Arcta est via quæ ducit ad vitam: It is a straight way that leadeth to everlasting life. In this way are three armed Knights, that is, the Devil, the World, and the Flesh: with whom it behoveth us to fight, and to obtain the victory, before we may come to Heaven. The second City that is in the North, is Hel: and to this accordeth the Scripture, saying thus: Ab aquilone pone-

tur

netur omne malum: But of the Mouth commeth all evil. Certainly to this City the way is plain and broad, and walled about on every side with all manner of delights, wherefore many men walk by this way. The three Knights that give to every man going this way what thing them pleaseth, are these, Pride of life, Covetousnesse of the eyes, and Concupiscence of the flesh: in which three the wretched man greatly delighteth, and at the last they lead him to Hell. This witty Knight betokeneth the soul, and the foolish Knight betokeneth the flesh which is alway foolish; and at all times ready to do evill. These two are fellowes and knit in one: for either of them drink others blood, that is, they shall drink of one cup, either of joy or paine which they shall have after the day of Doome.

The Soul chooseth the way of Repentance, and in as much as shee may, shee stirreth the flesh to do the same. But the flesh never thinketh what shall come after, and therefore shee goeth on in the delights of this World, and flieth the vertue of Repentance. And thus the soul after death is cast into Hell, and the flesh is cast into the ditch, that is into the grave. But when the Judge commeth,

commeth, that is our Lord Jesus Christ at the last day to iudge all mankinde. Then the Soul shall complaine upon the flesh, and the flesh upon the soule: But then the Judge that cannot be deceived shall condemne the Soule, because she followed the frailty of the flesh and the flesh because it would not beleeve the soul. Wherefore let us study to tame our flesh that we may obey God, and then we shall have eternall life. Unto which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ Amen.

The Argument.

The Soul of man being possessed of the Princely Territory of Paradise, was by the Devil provoked to sin against her Creator, and for the same transgression (being thence into the wide World exiled) lost that her heritage: but by Christs blessed Death and Passion was restored unto a more happy heritage of everlasting felicity.

The eleventh History.

There dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperor named Frederick, which had no Childe, but one onely Daughter,

Daughter, to whom this Emperor after his decease bequeathed all his Empire. This understanding an Earle that dwelt there beside, hee came to this young Lady and wooed her, and provoked her to sinne all that hee might: whereby this young Lady in short processe of time inclined to the Earle, and this Earle anon lay with her and defiled her: and after that he drave her from her heritage, and exiled her out of the Empire, wherefore shee made great lamentation, and fled unto a Realme there beside, where she daily wept and mourned.

It befell after on a day, that while shee sate mourning by the high-wayside there came riding by her a fair young Knight upon a Horse, who came towards her a great pace, and very courteously saluted her, asking her the cause why she mourned so sore. Then answered she and said: my reverend Lord, I am an Emperors daughter, descended of royall blood, my father is dead, who left me all his Empire, because he had no other heire. And after his decease an Earl there beside decsived me, defloured my virginity, and after that hee put me violently out of my heritage, so that now I am fain to begg my bread from

from dayze to dayze, and this is the cause of my sorrow. Then said the Knight: faire Damsel, I have great compassion on thy beauty and thy comelinesse: therefore if thou wilt grant me one thing, I will fight for thee against the Earl, and I will assure thee the victory. Then said shee, alas good sir, I have nothing that I may give unto you but my selfe. And I aske no more of thee said the Knight, but that thou wouldest be my wife, and love no man so much as me. Then said she: Reverend sir, that I will doe gladly and more if I might. Then said the Knight: I will that you doe nothing for me, but if it fortune me to die in the fight for thee, and obtain the victory, thou shalt take my bloudy shirt, and hang it upon a beam in thy Chamber: and this thou shalt doe for two causes. The first is, that whensoever thou beholdest the shirt thou shalt weep for me. The second is, that whatsoever man come to woo thee to be his wife, thou shalt then hastily runne unto thy Chamber, and there beholding my bloody shirt, think heartily within thy selfe thus:

The Lord of this shirt dyed for my love in battel by which he recovered my heritage. God forbid that I should take

any other man after his death. The said she, Reverend sir, all this I shall fullfill by the grace of God. And when ỳ Knight heard this, he allayed to fight against the said Earl, and obtained the victory, and the Earl was overcome and fled, and this young Lady was brought and received againe into her heritage. Nevertheless the Knight was deadly wounded in that battel, whereof he died: but ere hée dyed hée bequeathed his bloody shirt unto the Damsel, desiring her to kéep her promise. When this young Lady heard of his death she wept sore, for in his shirt was wrought thus:

Think on me, and have in minde
Him, that to thee was so kinde.

Anon when shée had received the shirt shée hanged it upon a beam in her chamber, and as oft as she beheld it, she wept bitterly. It befell not long after, that the States of ỳ Empire came to her, and desired her to take an husband: but then shée went to her chamber, and beheld the bloody shirt, and wared sorrowfull, and said oftentimes Woe and alas, thou sufferedst death for my love, and thou also recoveredst again my heritage: God forbid that I should take any other man but thée. And

thus she answered every man that came to her: and so they went away disappointed of their purpose, and she endes her life in rest.

The Morall

Dear Friends, this Emperor is the Father of heaven, and his daughter is the Soul of Man, made to the similitude of God: to whom he gave and bequeathed the Empire of Paradice. But there came the Earle, that is, the Devil, and provoked her to sin, when she eat of the Apple, and said to her thus: In what houre ye eat of this Apple ye shall be like Gods. Wherefore we breaking Gods commandement were exiled out of Paradise, to live in this world in great wretchednesse, as the Scripture saith: In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread. But then came a faire young Knight, and a strong, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ, who had compassion upon Mankind, and taking upon him our flesh & blood, gave battel to the Devil, and overcame him: and thus won he again our heritage. Therefore let us do as this yong Lady did, let us lay this bloody shirt, that is, the remembrance of the Passion of Christ, on the beam of our hearts, let

us think how our Lord Jeſus ſhed his pretious bloud for us. And if any man, that is, if the Devil, or any other would ſtirre us to ſin, let us think preſently on the paſſion of Chriſt, ſaying thus: I will take none other but thee, who haſt ſhed thy bloud for me: and thus ſhall we win everlaſting life. Unto which God bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

We are here generally adverti ſed of honouring the Sabbath day: how, for the redeeming of time, to bee occupied in ghoſtly contemplation, is profitable to the ſoule and body: Alſo Preachers of Gods Word oftentimes for ſaying truth purchaſe ill will. If we beſtow our talents in the amplifying of Faith, and furthering one of another with good works, we ſhall then inherit the fruition of eternall life prepared for Chriſts Elect.

The 12. Hiſtory.

IN Rome ſometimes dwelt a mighty Emperor named Apollinus, who ordained a Law that every man upon pain of death ſhould celebrate the day of his nativity. This Emperor called to him a

Clark

Clark that was hight Virgil, and said: My dear Master, there be many haynous offences done in my Empire contrary to the Law, therefore I pray thee that thou by thy cunning wouldst make some craft whereby I may know who trespasseth against the Law privily or openly. Then said Virgil, My reverend Lord, your will shall be done. Anon this Virgil through his craft made an Image in the midst of the City of Rome, which denounced and told the Emperors messengers who trespassed against the Law, and who not. There was at that time dwelling in the City of Rome a Smith that hight Focus, which by no meanes would celebrate the Nativity of the Emperor. It befel upon a night as the Smith lay in his bed he thought upon the Image that accused many men before dreading lest the Image would accuse him, wherefore he arose and went to the Image, and and said, I make a vow to God if thou accuse me, I shall break thy head: and when he had said thus hee went home. The Emperor on ỹ Morrow following sent messengers to the Image (as before time he was customed) to know & understand who had trespassed against the Law. And to them then said the

Image lift up your eyes and behold what is ingraven in my fore-head. And when they looked up, they ſaw this poſy written. Times be changed, and men become worſe and worſe: For he that will ſay the truth, ſhall have his head broken. Therefore go yée forth to your Lord, and tell him all that ye have heard and ſéen. The meſſengers went forth and told the Emperor all they had heard and ſéene.

Then ſaid the Emperor, arme your ſelves and goe to the Image, and if ỹ you finde any man that hath menaced or threatned to hurt the Image, bind him hand and foot, and bring him unto mee. Then went the meſſengers forth to the Image, and ſaid to it: tell us the truth if any man have threatned thee, and we ſhall revenge thee anon. Then ſaid the Image: Take the Smith Focus, for he is the man that will not honour the Nativity of ỹ Emperor. Straightway the Meſſengers led forth the Smith before the Emperor: and there examined him why he kept not the day of the Emperors Nativity in reverence and honour, according to the Law. Then anſwered the Smith and ſaid: Reverend Lord, I beſeech you that you will hear mine excuſe, and if I anſwer not reaſo-

reasonably to all manner of points that ye shall ask me, I will yeld me fully to your Grace: then said the Emperor, I will hear thee, and that which is right, that I will doe.

Then said the Smith, I must have eight pence every day in the week, and that I cannot get without great labor, and therefore I may not keep that day holy day more than other dayes. Then said the Emperor: why must thou have these eight pence? Then said the Smith I am bound to pay daily two pence: and two pence I lend: and two pence I lose: and two pence I spend. Then said the Emperor, tell me more expressely of these eight pence. Then said the Smith, I am bound every day to pay two pence to my Father: for when I was young, he spent daily two pence on me, which I am bound to pay him again for his sustentation: and two pence I lose on my wife. Then said the Emperour, why losest thou that two pence on thy wife? Then said he: where saw ye ever woman but she had one of these properties, either she was wilfull and contrary to her husband, or hot of complexion: and therefore that I give her I lose. Also two pence I lend to my son wherewith hee

is sustained, that when I come to age and poverty he may pay me two pence again, like as I doe my Father. Also I spend two pence on my selfe in meat and drink, and that is little enough. Then said the Emperor, thou hast answered well and wisely. Not long after the Emperor dyed, and this Smith Focus was chosen to be Emperor, because he spent his eight pence so wisely and so profitably, and thus he ended his life in peace and rest.

The Morall.

Dear Friends, this Emperor is our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, which ordained by his holy Law that every man should keep holy the Sabbath day. This Virgil that made that Image is the holy Ghost, who established among us Preachers to teach verrues and reproue vices, & they should not spare the poore nor the rich. But now if a Preacher should speak the truth against any man, he shall be threatened by the enemies of Christ, that is, by evill men ỳ neither love God nor man. Wherfore the Preacher may say now a dayes, that Posey which was written in the fore-head of ỳ Imag, Times be changed from good to ill, and men be daily

worse:

worse: for who so would speak the truth now adayes shall have his head broken. Therefore it is nedfull they be armed, that is, Preachers ought to be armed with vertuous examples of good life, & then they ned not fear, because they have the truth of God to stand by them according to ỹ Apostles saying: If God be for us, who can be against us.

By this Smith Focus, is understood every good Christian man, whs daily should spend his time in redeeming of every houres travel with some profit corporall or spirituall: and then ought he to bes presented before the heavenly Emperor. This Focus paid two pence to his Father, and so we should pay to our Father of heaven two pence, ỹ is, honour and love. For when wee were the children of wretchednesse, and in bondage, Almighty God sent down to the earth his Sonne to redeme us, according to S. Iohn the Evangelist, saying: God loved the world so well that he gave his onely begotten Son for the salvation of the world. Also this Focus lent two pence to his Son: that is, every Christian man ought to lend to the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ true & unfained faith, and fruitfull good works and deeds in our life, and he will

repay

repay us again at the day of doome with his heavenly mercy, when soul and body shall be glorified. And that he is our brother may be proved by the text of Esay, saying, A child is borne to us. This Focus lost two pence to his wife: his wife betokeneth ȳ flesh, upon whom thou loseſt two pence, that is, unlawfull love and consent to sinne, because the flesh is contrary to the spirit, and is ever subiect to sinne. This Focus also spent two pence on himself: by the first penny ye shall understand repentance, whereat the Angels in Heaven do greatly reioyce: by the second penny ye shall understand perfect perseverance in amendment of life: for he that abideth unto the end shall be saved. And he that spendeth well these two pence shall obtain everlasting life. Unto which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

Man being blind through sinne, and either by infirmity of fraile flesh, or suggestion trespassing with evil and lewd company though God of his mercy be favourable unto him in his life time by reason of the foresaid respect, yet if he accustomably walke on forward in this worldly wicked-

wickedneſſe his wilful blindneſſe ſhall not excuſe him, but accuſe him in the day of judgement, moſt grieviouſly to have offended God, in abuſing his mercy offered, and therefore the leſſe worthy to have the reward of the ſimple ſoul that repentantly and with modeſty liveth to the fruition of everlaſting bliſſe.

The thirteenth Hiſtory.

SOmetime in Rome dwelt a noble Emperor, which among all other vertues loved beſt mercy: wherefore he ordained a Law, that every blind man ſhould have an hundred ſhillings by the yeare of his treaſure. It befel on a day that certain men came to a Tavern to drink wine, and after that theſe men had ſitten in the Tavern three dayes, the fourth day they were greatly in debt for y wine: wherefore the Vintner came to them and demanded mony for his wine. Then ſaid one of the Drinkers, Sirs, the Emperor hath made ſuch a Law, that every blind man ſhall have an hundred ſhillings of his treaſure: therefore let us caſt lots among us, and to whom the lot faleth, let his eyes be put out, and ſo he may go to the Emperors Pallace, and get an hundred ſhillings to

diſcharge

discharge us. Now this counsel liked them well: so they cast lots, and the lot fell on him that gave the counsel, & his fellowes immediatly put out his eyes.

And when he was blind, he went to the Emperors Pallace, and asked an hundred shillings of the Steward according to the Emperors decree. Dear Friend, said the Steward, thou diddest see with both thine eyes a while since, thou also understandest the Law amisse: for the Law is made for men that are blind through infirmities, or by the will of God, but the other day thou hadst thy sight in the Tavern, and hast wilfully lost it. Therefore goe to the Tavern again to thy fellowes and discharge there what thou owest, for here gettest thou not a farthing. Then went this wretched man forth and told his fellowes of the Stewards answer, and with that came in the Vintner & dispoyled them of all their clothes, and beat them, and thus drove them with shame out of the City: And so were they never after seen there.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor is our Saviour Christ, who ordained a Law that

that every blind man should have an hundred shillings of his treasure. This blind man betokeneth every Sinner, who sinneth through infirmity, or the enticing of the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, and shall receive an hundred shillings, if he be inwardly repentant of his sins: that is, he shall have an hundred times more joy, according to the Scripture, saying, Ye shall receive an hundred times more joy if ye repent and turn from sinne, and also ye shall have everlasting life. These men that came to the Taverne to drink Wine, be Sinners, who oftentimes come to the Taverne of our Adversary the Devil, to drink of his carnal appetites, that is, they there consume and waste away all spirituall vertues, which they received when they received the Sacrament of Baptisme. Where the Devil our Enemy dispoyleth them of all their good deeds that ever they have wrought before. They cast lots, that is, they cast among them the custome of sinne, and this lot of sinne falleth on such as are unthankfull and mercilesse: and such a man wilfully becommeth blind, that is, he becommeth wilfully a foule sinner like Iudas that betrayed our Lord without any sug-

gestion

geſtion or inticing. And therefore ſu
men ſinne moſt grievouſly. When th
come before the Steward, that is befo
the Prelates of the Church they c
hardly obtain an aſſurance of Heave
becauſe they be not in the right way
leave their ſin. Therefore let us ſtud
with all diligence to pleaſe God, that w
may obtain everlaſting life, which i
laid up in ſtore for all thoſe that liv
modeſtly, looking for eternall ſalvati
on. Unto which bring us our Lor
Jeſus Chriſt. Amen.

The Argument.

A certain vow of love being made be
tween the ſoul of every faithful Chriſtian
and Ieſus Chriſt, we are to conſider the
merciful and gracious Covenant of God
toward the faithful, and to be careful of
this Covenant, and we are to ſtudy
to performe our vow, ſo as we at the
prefixed day of promiſe being unde-
filed, may thereby purchaſe the pro-
miſed place of everlaſting glory, pre-
pared for all them that ſeek the glory
of God, and their ſouls health.

The fourteenth Hiſtory.

IN Rome ſometime dwelt a mighty
Emperor named Philominus who had

one

one onely Daughter, who was fair and gracious in the sight of every man, who had to name Aglaes. There was also in the Emperors pallace a gentle Knight that loved dearly this Lady. It befell after on a day, that this Knight talked with this Lady and secretly uttered his desire unto her. Then she said courteously, seeing you have uttered to me the secrets of your heart, I will likewise for your love utter to you the secrets of my heart, and truely I say that above all other I love you best. Then said the Knight I purpose to visit the holy land, and therefore give mée your troth, that this seven years you shall take no other Man, but only for my love to tarry for me so long, and if I come not again by this day seven years, then take what man you like best. And likewise I promise you that within this seven years I will take no wife. Then said she this covenant pleaseth me well. When this was said, each of them was betrothed to other, & then this Knight took his leave of the Lady and went to the holy Land. Shortly after the Emperor treated with the King of Hungary for the marriage of his daughter. Then came the King of Hungary to the Emperors pallace to sée

his

his daughter, and when he had seen her, he liked marvellous wel her beauty and her behaviour, so that the Emperor and the King were accorded in all things as touching the marriage, upon the condition that the Damsel would consent. Then called the Emperor the young Lady to him, and said: O my fair Daughter, I have provided for thee, that a King shall be thy husband if thou list to consent, therefore tell me what answer thou wilt give to this. Then said she to her Father, it pleaseth mee well: but one thing deare Father, I intreat of you if it might please you to grant me: and this it is, I have vowed to kéep my virginity, and not to marry this seven years, therefore dear Father I beseech you for all the love that is betwéen your gracious Father-hood and me, that ye name no man to be my husband till these seven years be ended, & then I shall be ready in all things to fulfill your wil. Then said the Emperor sith it is so that thou hast thus vowed, I will not break thy vow, but when these seven years bee expired thou shalt have the King of Hungary to thy husband.

Then the Emperor sent forth his Letters to the King of Hungary, praying him

him if it might please him to stay seven yeares for the love of his Daughter, and then he should speed without faile. Here-with the King was pleased, and content to stay the prefixed day.

And when the seven yeares were ended save a day, the yong Lady stood in her Chamber window and wept sore saying: Woe and allas, as to morrow my love promised to be with mée again from the Holy Land: and also the King of Hungary to morrow will be here to marry me, according to my Fathers promise: and if my Love comes not at a certaine hour, then am I utterly deceived of the inward love I beare to him.

When the day came the King hasted toward the Emperors, with a great earnestnesse to marry his Daughter, & was royally arrayed in Purple. And while the King was riding on his way there came a Knight riding by him, to whom hee said deare friend, whence art thou, and whence commest thou? the Knight answered and said, I am of the Empire of Rome, and now am lately come from the Holy Land, and I am ready to doe you the best service I can. And as they rode talking by the way, it began to raine so fast that all

the Kings apparell was sore wet. Then said the Knight: my Lord, yee have done foolishly, for as much as ye brought not with you your house. Then said the King: why speakest thou so? My house is large and brode, and made of stones, and morter, how should I then bring with mee my House: thou speakest like a fole. When this was said, they rode on till they came to a great deep water, and the King smote his Horse with his spurs and leapt into the water, so that he was almost drowned. When the Knight saw this, and was ober on the other side of the water without perill, he said to the King, ye were in perill, and therefore yee did foolishly, because yee brought not with you your Bridge. Then said the King thou speakest strangly, my Bridge is made of lime and stone, and containeth in quantity more then halfe a mile, how should I then bear with me my Bridge? therefore thou speakest foolishly. Then said the Knight, my foolishnesse may turn thee to wisdome. When the King had ridden a little further, he asked the Knight what time of day it was. Then said the Knight, if any man hath lift to eat it is time of the day to eat, and therefore my reverend Lord, I pray take

modicum

modicum with mee, for that is no dishonour to you, but great honour to me before the States of this Empire. Then said the King: I will gladly eat with thee. They sat both downe in a faire Vine Garden, and there dined together both the King and the Knight. And when dinner was done, and that the King had washed, the Knight said to the King: My Lord, yee have done foolishly for that yee brought not with you your Father and Mother. Then said the King: what sayest thou? my Father is dead, and my Mother is old and may not travell, how should I then bring them with mee? therefore to say the truth a foolisher man than thou art did I never hear. Then said the Knight, every work is praised at the end.

When the Knight had ridden a little further, and was nigh the Emperors Pallace, he asked leave to goe from him, for he knew a nearer way to the Pallace, to the yong Lady, that hee might come first, and carry her away with him. Then said the King, I pray thee tell me by what plat thou purposest to ride? Then said the Knight, I shall tell you the truth: this day seven years I left a Net in a place, and now I purpose to visit it, and draw it to me,

and if it be whole, then will I take it to me, and keep it as a precious Jewel: if it be broken then will I leave it: and when he had thus said, he took his leave of the King, and rode forth, but the King kept the broad high way.

When the Emperor heard of the Kings comming, he went towards him with a great company, and royally received him, causing him to shift his wet cloathes, and to put on fresh apparrel. And when the Emperor and the King were set at meat, the Emperor welcomed him with all the chear and solace that he could. And when he had eaten the Emperor asked tidings of the King. My Lord, said he, I shall tell you what I have heard this day by the way. There came a Knight to me and reverently saluted me: and anon after, there fell a great rain, and greatly spoiled my apparrel. And anon the Knight said: Sir, you have done foolishly, for that you brought not with you your house. Then said the Emperor: what cloathing had the Knight on? A cloke, quoth the King. Then said the Emperor surely that was a wise man, for the house whereof he spake was a cloke, and therefore he said to you that you did foolishly, because you came

with

without your cloke, for if ye had brought with you a cloke, then your cloathes had not bẽn spoiled with rain. Then said the King, when we had ridden a little further, we came to a dẽep water, and I smote my Horse with my spurs, and I was almost drowned, but he rid through the water without any peril: then said he to me, ye did foolishly, for that you brought not with you your Bridge. Verily, said the Emperor, he saith truth: for he called the Bridge your Squires, that should have ridden before you, and affaid the dẽepnesse of the water. Then said the King, we rode further, and at the last he prayed me to dine with him. And when he had dined, he said, I did unwisely, because I brought not with me my Father and Mother. Truly said the Emperor, he was a wise man and saith truth: for he called your Father and Mother, bread and wine, and other victuals: Then said the King: we rode further, and anon after he asked me leave to go from me, and I asked earnestly whither he went: And hee answered again, and said: This day seven years I left a Net in a private place, and now I will ride to see it, and if it be broken & torn, then will I leave it: but if it be as I left it, then shall

it be unto me right precious. When the Emperor heard this, he cryed with a loud voyce, and said: O ye my Knights and servants, come ye with me speedily unto my Daughters Chamber, for surely that is the Net of which he spake. And forthwith his Knights and servants went unto his Daughters Chamber, and found her not, for the foresaid Knight had taken her with him. And thus the King was deceived of the Damsel. And he went home again to his own Country ashamed.

The Morall.

Dear Friends, this Emperor is our Lord Jesus Christ, and his fair Daughter is everlasting life, which the Emperor had ordained for Kings, Knights and other men. The Knight that lov this young Lady, is every good Christian soul, which holdeth himself n worthy to come into the sight of G unto such joy, as the Apostle saith, T sufferings of this time are not wort to attain to the glory that is to com This Knight was seven years abs from his love: like as a good Christ all the days of his life should labo and travel in fulfilling the seven wor of mercy. By the King that ca

wil

without a Cloke in the rain, is to be understood some mighty men in this World, which have Clokes to cover all their other clothes. By this Cloke is understood Charity as the Apostle saith: Charity covereth a multitude of sins: but many men have not this Cloke, wherefore they are wet with the rain of Pride, Avarice, and Lechery. This King also was almost drowned because he lacked his Bridge, that is, perfect Faith: for as we see that no man may passe over a great water, broad & deep, without a Bridge, or some other thing that is able to bear him: Right so, without faith it is unpossible to please God: for Christ saith, If ye have faith as a grain of Musterdseed, then may you say to the hils remove out of your places, and they shall remove. But many of us now adays have very feeble faith, and therefore do suddenly fall into the clay of desperation, and by deadly sins often times offend God. Also this King had not brought with him his father and his mother: By the father which is cause of generation, is understood Humility, without which there is no vertue in any man, and thereto accordeth S. Gregory, saying, He that gathereth all other vertues without Humility, is like a man

that casteth dust into the wind. His Mother betokeneth Hope: therefore he that will obtain everlasting life, must have the Cloke of Charity, the Bridge of Faith, and a Father of Meekness, and a Mother of Hope, as the Apostle saith.

Also this Knight went the narrow way, and the King the broad way: for he that will be saved must go a strait way, that is, the way of Abstinence, Almes-deeds, Chastity, and Repentance. Of the which way speaketh the Apostle. The way is strait that leadeth unto everlasting life. But many men go the other way which leadeth to Hell, that is, by the way of fleshly lust: and such men go out of the way of everlasting life. Therefore study we to walk the narrow way, that thereby we may obtain everlasting life.

The Argument.

By the History is figured, as appeareth in the Moral, the Soul of every good Christian, held of him as his Daughter: but being seduced, carried away, and defiled by Sathan her foul enemy, she is reduced by the help and valiant prowesse of her heavenly Champion Christ Iesus, unto her former Habitation. Yet man being ungrateful to his Redeemer, forgeteth

getteth his duty, and for good reward-eth evil to his Champion Christ Iesus, delivering him to be judged by the Law, as an Offender: but when the Champion avoucheth what hee hath done for man and his soul, then he is with shame of his ingratitude constrained to remorse, and call for grace to repent and amend his life, that by the death of his Champion Christ, he may obtain eternal life.

The fifteenth History.

SOmetime dwelt in Rome a noble Emperor named Agias, which had retained unto him a Knight named Gerard, which was a worthy Warriour, nevertheless he was as meek as a Lamb in the Emperors Court, but in the field he was like a Lyon. This Emperor had a fair Daughter, whom the strong and mighty Earl of Pelester carried by force away, and defiled, which more displeased the Emperor than the carrying of her away. Therefore he called unto him his Counsel, and said: Dear Friends, the violence done to me in deflouring of my Daughter, is not unknown to you, and therefore I purpose to give battel to the Earl: wherefore I may

pray you to be ready at a day, that ye may proceed with me in battel. And they ſaid: Sir, we be ready to live and die with you in battel.

When the appointed day of battel came, they met on both ſides, and a cruel ſharp conflict was proſecuted on both ſides, and almoſt all on the Emperors part were ſlain. And as the Emperor himſelf was forcibly aſſailed, the Knight Gerard put himſelf among the Enemies before the Emperor and fought manfully, and ſo the Emperor eſcaped, and the Knight abode and ſlue the Earl, nevertheleſſe the Knight had divers wounds. Notwithſtanding this, he abode ſtill till the blood ran down to his foot. And when the Enemies ſaw that the Earl was ſlain, they fled, and the Knight with his people followed on the chaſe till they came to the place where the Emperors Daughter was, and led her with him. And thus with triumph and victory, he returned again to the Emperor. For the which victory and re-obtaining of the Emperors Daughter, hee was greatly praiſed of all people. Not long after it befell that this Knight had a ſuit in the Emperors Court, wherefore the Knight came unto the Emperor, and prayed him meekly

to

to be favourable to his cause: and furthermore desired him to doe reason touching his honest demand.

When the Emperor had heard him, he called to him a Judge, and said, Sir, Our Will is that you do all equity unto this Knight. And when the Knight heard this, he cryed with a loud voyce: Alas, alas, who ever heard of such an Emperor. Thou wert (said he) in battel, where thy head should have been smitten off, and I in mine own person, (and none other man) put my self in jeopardy for thee, and saved thee: and now thou hast assigned another man to be Judge in my cause: alas that ever thou wert born, and with that word the Knight put off all his cloathes, and shewed the wounds that he had received in the battel, unto all the men that were there present, and said: Lo, what have I suffered for thee, O Emperor. I did put no other man in my stead, and now thou assignest another man in my cause. Sothly I say to thee, that I never served such a Lord before.

When the Emperor heard this, being almost confounded in himself, he said: O dear Friend, all that thou sayest is truth, thou savedst me from death, thou didst re-obtain my Daughter

again,

again, and for my sake thou hast suffered many wounds: verily it is right, that I in mine own person come down and make an end of thy cause, so as may be to thy content, and to mine honour. And then the Emperor laboured very busily in his matter, and made thereof an end according to the Knights request: wherefore all men greatly commended the Emperor.

The Morall

Dear Friends, this Emperor may be called every Christian man, or else all mankind, which had a fair Daughter, that is to say, the soul, made to the similitude of God. This Earl betokeneth the Devil, which carrieth away, and defloureth by sin the soul of man, through eating the fruit of the forbidden Tree: wherefore all mankind was in thraldom, till a strong and valiant Knight came and put himself on the Crosse to suffer death, as a Redeemer of mankind from the Devil. For if that had not been, we had all been partakers of thraldom everlastingly: and this Knight reduced and re-obtained the soul of man unto the Church, wherefore he suffered many great wounds in his body. And now this Knight, that is,

our

our Lord Jesus Christ hath a matter to do among us, that is, to find in us perfect faith: wherefore he calleth on us daily that we would be ready at all times, saying thus in Apocalyps the third, Lo, I stand and knock at the door, if any man will open to me, I will come in and sup with him. But many men do as the Emperor did, the which appointed the knight another Judge than himself: for now adays there be some men that will do no repentance for the love of him which assigned no other man but himself to fight for us. And therefore against unthankful persons it shall be said thus. Lo, he suffered for us on the Crosse, dispoiled of all his clothing, and shewed to us all his wounds that he suffered.

Be we therefore thankful unto God for all his graces, and be content that we may suffer for his love some sorrowful repentance. For he that suffereth pain for the love of God in this life, shall receive a hundred times more reward in the life everlasting. Unto the which our Lord Jesus Christ bring all mankind. Amen.

The

The Argument.

The soul of man is here warned to eschue the pleasant baits and subtil crafts of the devil that she yeeld not to his allurements, lest he get the vantage of this mortal course from her, and bereave her of her joyes in the life to come.

The sixteenth History.

THere dwelt sometimes in Rome a wise Emperor named Pompey, which had a vertuous Daughter named Aglas. This Damsel had many endowments above all other women in that Empire. First, she was fair and gracious in the sight of every man: also she was swift in running, so that no man might overtake her by a right Race. When the Emperor understood these two properties in his Daughter, he was right joyful: Wherefore he proclaimed throughout all his Empire, that what man por or rich would run with his Daughter, should have her to wife, with great riches, if he could overrun her, and come sooner to the mark than she: and if she overrun him, and came sooner to the mark than he, his head should be smitten off.

When

When the States of that Empire, as Dukes, Earls, Barons, and Knights, heard this cry, they offered themselves one after another to run with her, but ever this yong Lady over-ran them all: wherefore they lost their heads according to the Law. That time there was a poor man dwelling in Rome, which thought within himself, I am a poor man, and come of poor kindred, there is a common cry made, that what man soever can outrun the Emperors Daughter by any means, shall be promoted to great honour and riches: now therefore if I might over-run her by any manner of way, I should not only be promoted to great honour, but also all my kindred. Then this poor man provided himself of three things, whereby he might win her. First he made a Garland of red Roses and white. Secondly, he made a rich Girdle of Silk cunningly wrought. Thirdly, he made a Purse of Silk, imbroydered with precious stones, and within the Purse was a Ball of three colours, and upon this Ball was written this Posey, Who playeth with me, shall not be weary of my play. Then put he these three things in his bosome, and went forth to the Pallace gate, crying

ing and saying: Come forth faire Lady for I am ready to run with you, and to fulfill the Law in all things.

When the Emperor heard this, he commanded his Daughter to run with him. This young Lady went to her chamber window, and when she saw him, she despised him, and said: I have overcome many worthy Knights, and now must I run with a Charle: nevertheless I will fulfil my Fathers commandement.

Anon the damsel arrayed her for to run with him And at the last they run together, and within short space the Damsel got far before him. When the Jugler saw this, he threw forth his Garland of flowers before her. And when the Damsel beheld and saw it, she stooped down and took it up, and set it upon her head, and that while the Jugler went before her. But when this young Damsel saw this, she wept sore, and for sorrow she threw the Garland into a ditch, and ran after him, and at last she overtook him, and lift up her right hand, and gave him a buffet, saying; abide thou wretch, it becometh not thy fathers son to have me to wife. And then this Lady did over-run him, and went before him a great space. And when the Jugler saw this, he took the Girdle out of

his

his bosome, and shew it before her. And when she saw that, she stoped down and took it up, and girded her therewith, and the while the Jugler gat before her again. Now when she saw that, she was vexed, and took the Girdle, and with her teeth tare it in three pieces, and then threw it from her: and then she ran fast after him: and at the last overtook him, and then she gave him a great blow, saying: O wretch, thinkest thou to overcome me? and with that she ran before him again. The Jugler was slie and subtil, and kept the Purse till they were nèer the mark, and then he threw it before her, and anon she stoped down and took it up, and opened it, and took out the Ball, and read the Posey: Who playeth with me shall never be weary of my play. And she began to play, and continued so long in playing, till that the Jugler was before her at the mark. And thus he won the Emperors Daughter.

The Morall.

Dear Friends, this Emperor is our Saviour Jesus Christ, and his fair Daughter is the Soul of Man, which was made clean by the efficacy of Baptism, and was also swift in run-

ning, that is, in vertue, whils she was in her cleannels, so that no deadly sin might overcome her. This Jugler that is so subtil and crafty, is the Devil, which studieth day and night to deceive innocents. He provided him of three things. First, of the Garland, which betokeneth Pride: for why? a Garland of flowers is not set upon the arm, nor upon the foot, but upon the head, that it may be seen: so Pride would be seen. Wherefore S. Augustine saith: When thou seest a proud man, fear not to call him the child of the Devil. Do thou therefore as the Maiden did, be angry at thy sins, and cast off the Garland of Pride, into the ditch of Repentance, and so shalt thou give the Devil a bucket, and overcome him. But when this Jugler, that is, our ghostly enemy the Devil, seeth himself overcome in one sin, then he returneth and tempteth a man in another sin: and casteth before man the Girdle of Lechery. And alas, there be many girded with this Girdle of Lechery: of the which Girdle speaketh Saint Gregory, saying: Gird we our loines with the girdle of Chastity, for whosoever is girt with this Girdle shall not lose the hope of life. Then casteth this Jugler (that is the Devil) the Purse

with

with the Ball. The Purse that is open above, & close under, betoken the heart, which evermore should be close in the bottome against earthly things, and open above to heavenly joy: and the two strings that open and shut the Purse, betoken the love of God, and of our neighbours: the Ball which is round and moveable, to every part of his difference, betokeneth covetousness, which moveth ever both in yong and old, and therefore the Poesy was true, that was written on the Ball: Who so playeth with me, that is with Covetousness, shall never be satisfied. Therefore saith Seneca. When all sins wax old, then Covetousness waxeth yong. Therefore let us take heed that we play not with this Ball of Covetousness, and then without doubt we shall obtain through the merits of Christ, the blisse of heaven that never shall end. Unto the which he bring us that shed his precious blood for us.

The Argument.

The Preaching of Gods Word, and every good prayer, is a sweet sounding melody in the Ears of God, and hath a promised reward of God, yet there is now and then stirred up in us some

let thereof by our whiſtling adve
ſary the Devil, and we are hindr
for a time, untill by the Provide
of God, godly Preachers be ſe
forth, which with the hook of G
Word do win again our loſt felici
and ſo recover the fall of ſuch ſo
as were ſeduced and led away, i
the joyful and perpetual fellowſh
of the bleſſed Angels of heaven.

The ſeventeenth Hiſtory.

SOmetime dwelt in Rome a Mo
Emperor & a wiſe, named Theod
ſius, which loved greatly the Muſick
the Harp, and likewiſe the paſtime
Hunting. It befell upon a day as t
Emperor hunted in a Forreſt, he hea
a ſweet noiſe of a Harp, ſo that throu
the ſweetneſs thereof, he was alm
ravithed of his wits, wherfore he ſoug
about the Forreſt to find that melod
and at the laſt he eſpied at the end of
Forreſt a poor man ſitting beſide
water playing on a Harp full ſwee
Then ſaid the Emperor, good frie
proceedeth this melody from thy Ha
or no? The poor man anſwered and ſa
My reverend Lord, I ſhall tell y
the truth. Here beſide this water,

wife, my child, and I have dwelt this thirty years, and God hath given me such a gift, that when I play on my harp, I make such melody that the fishes of this water come out to my land, so that therewith my wife, my child, and I have been sustained in great plenty. But alas, sometime on the other side of this water there commeth a whistler and he whistleth so sweetly that many times the fishes forsake me, and go to him: therefore my reverend lord I crave your help against this whistler. Then said the Emperor, I shall give thee good help, I have here in my purse a golden hook, which I will give thee, take it, and bind it fast to the end of a rod and put a Worm upon the hook, then cast thy rod into the water, and play upon the harp, and when thou perceivest the fish to bite on the hook, draw them up to the land with that hook, and then his whistling shall not avail. When the poor man heard this, he rejoyced greatly, and did as he had taught him. And when this poor man began to play upon his harp, the fishes came to the baite, and then he took them with his hook, and lived thereby in better estate long time, and at the last ended his life in peace and rest.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor betoketh our Lord Jesus Christ, who greatly delighteth to hunt the soul of mankind in the Forrest, that is, the holy Church. He loveth also the melody of the Harpe, that is, he loveth much them that teach the holy Word of God. This poor man that sat by the water side, betokeneth the Prelates of the Church, & the Preachers of the Word of God, which ought to be alway resident in their Charge, and not in the world, that is, they should not set their delight on worldly things. The Preachers ought to have the Harp of the Scripture, wherewith they may praise and honor God, and also therewith draw out of this world sinners. Therefore saith the Psalmist thus, Praise the Lord upon the Harpe, sing to the Lord with a Psalm of thanksgiving. Psal. 98. But nowadays the Preacher may sing alas: for when I preach and teach the holy Scripture, the Devil commeth and whistleth so sweetly, that the sinners draw to him, and will not hear the Word of God: but they turn themselves only to the delight of sin. The Devil deceiveth also mankind by divers ways. For

in the time of preaching he maketh some to sleep, and them that he cannot make to sleep, he causeth them to talk and clatter: and them that he cannot make to clatter, he maketh them so dull that they cannot understand what the Preacher saith: and them that hee cannot beguile by these means, he putteth into them business, and causeth them to go out of the Church. Behold how many ways the Devil hath to deceive mankind, and to hinder the Word of God. Therefore every Prelate, and every Preacher ought to have the golden hook of Gods Word against this whiffling, by which they may draw sinners out of this world up to heaven. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

Mans soul the daughter of our Saviour, is right dear unto him, and though he be careful for the confirming of her in the state of sincere life, yet she is seduced by the suggestion of the flesh, which being a grievous transgressor, is yet by earnest repetance and amendment of life brought by the soul unto dutiful obedience towards God and man, that thence

forwards so continuing they together may be partaker of everlasting blessedness.

The eighteenth History.

There dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperor named Ptolomeus which had but one child, a Daughter, whom he loved so much that day and night she was guarded with armed Knights: and over those Knights he ordained a Controuler to instruct them how they should do. He ordained also a Steward for to guide his Houshold. And when all this was done, on a night as he lay in his bed he resolved that he would go visit the holy land. And when all things were ready for his journey according to his desire, he called unto him his Steward and said: My trusty servant, I purpose now to go see the holy Land, and therefore I commit my Daughter to thy keeping, and I charge thee that she lack nothing, but that she have all manner of joy that appertaineth to such a Virgin. Moreover I leave to thy keeping five Knights that be her Guard, and I charge thee that they lack nothing that is fitting for them. Also I leave with thee my Grayhound, commanding that thou nourish and feed him

as hitherto he hath bẽn: and if thou fulfill all this that I have said, thou shalt at my comming again receive a great reward. Then said the Steward: My Lord, in all that I may I shall fulfill your commaund. Anon the Emperor tok his iourney toward the City of Jerusalem, and the Steward along time kept well the Emperors commaund and the charge given him.

But at the last it befell upon a day that this Steward had espied this yong Lady walking alone in an Orchard, with whose love he was sudainly surprised: wherefore straight way, against her will, he defloured her. And when he had committed sin with her, he gave her ill language, and hated her more then ever hee loved her before, and drave her out of the Pallace: where ore the Damsel by this means being driven to necessity and great poverty, went from dor to dor and begged her bread. But when the Knights that were her keepers saw this, they reproved shamefully the Steward of that inhumane deed. Then the Steward waxed wrath, & for great hate that he had in his heart, he spoiled the Knights of their goods, and drove them from the Pallace. And when they were thus robbed and exiled, some for lack of living became

became theeves, and ſome men killers, ſo that through this inconvenience they wrought great harm.

Not long after there came tidings that the Emperor was arrived in that land comming homeward. And when the Steward heard this, he was greatly troubled and moved in himſelf and ſaid: It cannot be but I ſhall be accuſed for my treſpaſs that I have committed againſt the Emperors commandement, and he hath ever bèen my good and merciful Lord, therefore better it were that I go and mèet him with all lowlineſs and humility, and accuſe my ſelf unto him, and aſk him mercy, then that any other ſhould prevent me, and accuſe me to my Lord for my treaſon. Then the Steward ſtraight put off all his clothes, ſave his hoſen and his ſhirt, and took three Ropes with him in his right hand, and bare foot went and met the Emperor. Now when the Emperor had eſpied him comming a far off in ſuch manner he wondred greatly. And when the Steward was come ſo nèar that he might ſpeak to the Emperor, hee fell down on his knèes and ſaluted him reverently. Then ſaid the Emperor, what is befain thee, that thou mèeteſt me after ſuch a ſort: for in that thou

art

art my Steward, thou shouldest have met me with a great company of Noble Knights. Oh my Lord, quoth he, there is a heavy chance befalln me, for the which it behoves me to meet your Highness thus. Then said the Emperor, what chance is befalln thee? My Reverend Lord, quoth he, it behoves you first to ask me why I bring with me these three ropes. Then said the Emperor, why bearest thou these three ropes in thy hand? Then answered the Steward and said: This first rope I bring with me to bind my hands and feet so hard, till the blood burst out on every side, for that I have well deserved: the second Rope I bring with me, to draw me at a horse tail upon the pavement, till that my bones be bare without flesh, for that is but due to me for the great treason I have done against you. The third Rope I have brought, is to hang me with, upon an high Gallows, so long till that the birds light on my head, and on my body, and feed themselves on my flesh, for these things are due to such trespassers and breakers of the Law as I am. Yet Oh my Reverend Lord, have mercy on me, for I dare not acknowledg my trespass, until I have obtaynned your pardon. Then

said

said the Emperor: I see in thee great contrition, therefore tell me thy trespass, and surely thou shalt find mercy and grace. Alas, alas, then said the Steward, I have defiled thine onely Daughter, and have driven her out of thy Palace, so that now in great necessity thee beggeth her bread from dor to dor. I have also dispoyled thy Knights of all their goods, and now some of them in regard they lack living become theeves and robbers, and some men killers, and the Controwler of the Knights I have slain, but I fed thy Grayhound with the best meat as long as I might, and tied him with a chain, yet at the last he brake his chain, and went his way, so that now he runneth about the Country.

When the Emperor heard this, he was sore astonished, and said: Hast thou defloured my Daughter, whom I loved so well, and also dispoyled my Knights, and slain their Controuler, and the Grayhound which I loved well, of whom I gave thee charge, is he gone also? Surely were it not that I had forgiven thee, and that thou hast humbled thy self so much, I would have put thee to the vilest death that could be thought: notwithstanding depart hence

forth.

forthwith, and bring again my Daughter, that thou mayest marry her, and if any harm hereafter befal to her through thy default then will I double thy punishment. Also bring again my Knights, and restore to them their goods, and set them in their States and Offices as they were before. Also seek diligently for my Grayhound till thou find him, and then make him fast, so that hereafter in thee there be no fault found. Now when the Steward heard this, he bowed down with most humble submission, and thanked the Emperor for his great mercy. And then he went forth, and sought diligently through all the Empire, untill he found the Emperors Daughter, and the Knights, and the Grayhound, and brought them home again. And after he had married the yong Lady, and restored again the Knights goods, he ended his life in peace.

The Morall.

Dear Friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ. His Daughter betokeneth the Soul of Man, made after the similitude of our Lord God. The five Knights are the five Wits, armed with the vertue of Baptism for the preservation

ſervation of the Soul. The Controuler of the Knights, is Reaſon, which ought to rule the Wits. The Grayhound is the fleſh of man: and the Steward is every man, to whom God hath given a life and ſoul to keep, under pain of loſing everlaſting life. But wretched and wicked man, not remembring what is to come, full often corrupteth and polluteth his Soul with ſin, and repelleth her from her Pallace of Heaven, and then wandreth ſhe from dore to dore, that is from ſin to ſin. He diſpoyleth theſe five Knights of their goods, that is, the five Wits, or rather gracious Vertues, taking away the natural light from their eyes, giving them bad counſel, and alſo moving their ears to liſten unto ſlander and backbiting, and ſo forth of all the other Wits: and thus ſome be made theeves, and ſome mankillers. The Walker of theſe five Wits is ſlain whenſoever man is ruled by Will, and not by Reaſon. The Grayhound, that is, the Fleſh, wherein a man delighteth, was fed and bound with a chain of Reaſon, but breaking out, full oft doth much harm.

The comming again of this Emperor from the holy Land, betokens the comming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt at

the

the day of Doom to Judge all mankind. Wherefore let us, as the Steward did, accuse our selves of our sins first, lest the Devil and the world accuse us, then it is too late to ask mercy: therefore put we off our clothes betime, that is, our sinful life, and take we three Ropes in our hands. The first Rope that should bind our hands and feet, betokeneth the Rope of true Repentance, which not only ought to bind our hands and feet, but also our hearts within us, and our outward conversations, in such austerity of life, that the blood burst out on every side, that is, that sin might void it self. Hereto accordeth Ezekiel, saying thus: Whensoever the sinful man doth repent himself, he shall be forgiven. The second Rope for to draw the trespasser, is acknowledging of our sins, which should draw us from the beginning of our life, unto our lives end, by a perfect reconciliation of our selves to God and man, unto the time that the flesh be fain from the bones, that is, till the lust of the flesh be turned away by the stones of Repentance. For even as the stone by nature is hard, right so the way of Repentance ought to be hard. The third Rope, that should hang the

fellon,

fellon, is the Rope of amendment of life: for it is written in holy Scripture, There is more joy in Heaven over one Sinner that turneth unto the Lord in time, then over nintie and nine iuſt perſons.

Like as the Steward brought again the Emperors Daughter, ſo it behoveth us to ſeek about by a fruitful faith, until we find again our loſt ſoul, and ſo bring her again to the Church, to rule well our five Wits, to feed our Grayhound as we ſhould, and make our life ſo clean and pure, that we fall not again to ſin, for fear that it fortune to us worſe, and that we have no leiſure to ask mercy again at our needs. And if we fulfill all this truly unto our lives end, without doubt we ſhall obtain everlaſting life. To the which our Lord bring us all, Amen.

The Argument.

The violating of our innocency in not imitating the Law of God, is here deſcribed, which being adjudged after the Law, is death, but by the merits of Chriſt our Saviour we obtain ſalvation.

The

The nineteenth History.

IN Rome dwelt sometime a mighty Emperor, and a wise, named Eusenne who ordained a Law, that whosoever ravished a Virgin, should be at her discretion, whether shee would put him to death, or would take him to her husband.

It befell after, that a man ravished in one night two faire Maydens: the first Damsel which he ravished desired that he should die, but the second desired him to her husband. The ravisher was taken and led before the Judge that he might satisfie both these Damsels according to the equity of the cause. The first Damsell desired his death according to the Law. Then said the second, I desire to have him to my husband: and like as thou hast the Law for thée, so in like case I have it for me, and also my petition is much better then yours for it is more charitable: therefore me thinks in my reason, that the Judge should give sentence in favour and furtherance of my desire. When ỳ Judge heard the mercy of the second Damsell, he gave judgement that he should take her to Wife, and so it was done.

The Morall

Deare Friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. The Raviſher betokeneth every ſinner, which raviſheth Gods mercie, as often as he violateth the holy Commandements of God by ſinne, for the Devill can never overcome man, except hee bee ſuffered by the will: For Saint Auguſtine ſaith, It is not ſinne except it be voluntary. The Raviſher alſo is called before the Juſtice, when the Soule is departed from the body: and anon the firſt Counſell (Innocency) laid againſt the Sinner, that he ought to die everlaſtingly by the Law of righteouſneſſe: But the other Mayden (that is, Chriſts merits) alleaged for him, how the mercy of God ought to help by hearty repentance, and acknowledging of ſinnes, which is the high way to everlaſting life. Unto the which God bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

The Mother of the Childe of Grace and of the Reprobate is here declared, & ſo forth: but which of them ſhall be ſaved and which of them ſhall be damned,

not yet revealed to the World, until the last and dreadfull Day of judgement.

The twentieth History

SOmetime there dwelled in Rome a mighty Emperor and a rich, named Lypodus, which toke to Wife a fayre Virgin and a gentle, the Daughter of the King of Assyria. This young Lady conceived and bare him a Sonne, and in the birth she dyed: not long after her decease the Emperor married another Wife, and had by her a Sonne also: and immediately after the second childe was borne, hee sent them both into a strange Land there to bee brought up. Now when the children had beene there long, the Empresse said: my reverend Lord, ten yeeres bee now fully expired since I bare my Sonne and yet I never saw him but once, and that was the first day of his birth, therefore I beseech you my Lord, to send for him to the end that I may once rejoyce me in his sight. Then said the Emperor, I have another Childe by my first Wife, and if I send for thy Sonne, then must I send for them both: notwithstanding, at the Empresses request hee sent for them both: And when they were come, they were of passing fe-

ture, and well trained up, and so passing like in all things, that hardly the one might be known from the other, but the Father knew the difference.

Then said the Mother of the second Childe: My Lord, I pray you tell me which of these is my Sonne. Then the Emperour called to him that Sonne that he begat on his first Wife. When the Empresse heard this, shee gave all care to cherish him, and neglected the other Childe. Now when the Emperor saw this, hee said to his Wife, certainly I have deceived thee: for that that thou lovest so much is not thy Sonne, but the other is thy Sonne. Then set she all her care upon the second, and set light by the first. When the Emperor saw this, hee said: Truly I deceived thee: Without doubt he is not thy Sonne, but one of them that is thy Sonne. Then said the Mother: My Lord, I most earnestly intreat you that you would tell me without dissembling, which of them is my Sonne. The Emperor answered and said, certainly I will not tell you, untill that hee both come to mans estate, and this is my reason: First, I told you that this was your Sonne, and you cherished him, and forsooke that other: and

when I told you that this was your Sonne, then thou lightly regarded the first, and cherished the second. Therefore my desire is, that you cherish them both alike, that I may have like joy of them. When the Empresse heard this, shee cherished them both alike. And when they were both come to age, the Emperor made a great Feast, and before all his Nobles he told his wife openly which was her Sonne. Then reioyced the Empresse greatly, and when she had lived a good time, she ended her life in peace and rest.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperors Sonnes betokeneth those that be chosen to everlasting life, and those that be not chosen. The Mother of them is the Providence of God ý nourisheth them both: therefore our Lord wil not that his providence should let ý world know which be chosen, & which be not chosen. For if she knew that, then would shee love the one and hate the other, and so Charity among us would bee overthrown, and wee should live in discord and strife: but Truth at the day of Iudgement shall tel to us which of them shall be saved, & which of them shall bee dam-

damned. Therefore pray wée in this World that we may come to the everlasting feast in Heaven, Unto the which God bring us all.

The Argument.

The ungodly of this World will not take any paines to live vertuously and yet oftentimes they are enriched for the most part with the riches of Fortune, but they are not carefull of the reward laid up for the righteous in Heaven, neither doe they feare the torments of Hell appointed for the Reprobates.

The 21 History.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a Noble Emperour named Polinus, which had three Sonnes whom hée loved much. It befell upon a day, when this Emperor lay upon his Bed, hée bethought him to which of his Sonnes hé might give his Empire after his decease. Then called hée to him his three Sonnes, and said, Which of you is most sloathfull, hée shall have mine Empire after my decease. The first Sonne answered and said: the Empire by reason should bée mine, for I am so sloathfull that if my foot were in the fire I had rather

ther it should bee burnt, then I would take it out. Then said the second, I am (quoth hee) more fit for the Empire than thou, for though there were a cord about my neck wherewith I should bee hanged, and if I had a sharp sword in my hand, for very sloth I would not once put forth my hand to cut the cord to save my life. And when these two Brethren had thus said, then the third spake for himselfe thus: I ought to bee Emperor before you both, for I exceed you in sloth, and I will prove it thus: I lie upright in my bed, and there droppeth water upon my eyes, and for very sloth I will not move my head, neither to the right side of the bed, nor to the left, to save my selfe. When the Emperor heard this, he bequeathed the Empire unto the youngest, as to the slothfullest of the brethren.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperor betokeneth the Devil, which is the Lord and father over the ungodly in this World. By the first son is understood a man that chanceth into evil company, by which he falleth into misdemeanor, and had lever bee burnt in the fire of sin, than depart from them.

The ſecond Sonne betokeneth him that knowes himſelfe to be faſt bound with the band of ſinne, wherewith he is to be hanged on the gallowes of Hell, and is ſo ſlothfull that he will not cut it away with the ſword of true Repentance. By the third ſonne is underſtood a man that hears of the ioyes of Heaven and the paines of hell, yet will not move himſelf to the right nor to the left ſide to forſake his ſins, for fear of eternall paine: ſuch a man without doubt, for his ſloth ſhall receive the Kingdom of Hel, from which keep us our Lord Jeſus. Amen.

The Argument,

Mans ſoule, as a Captain General, with his Forces of armed Vertues fights againſt a ſtrong City, the World, wherein is the Caſtle of Vanity, and in that are the poyſoned forces of ſin, as mortall enemies of Mankind, againſt whom well to fight, is the means to obtaine victory, and triumph everlaſtingly.

The 22. Hiſtory.

ALexander ye mighty Emperor ſometime ruled, who beſieged a City of ye King of Egypt with a great Hoaſt, nevertheleſſe this Emperor loſt many worthy

worthy knights without any hurt or stroke. And thus from day to day his people dyed suddenly, whereat this Alexander wondred greatly, and was sorrowfull therefore in his mind, and he called unto him the wisest Philosophers that might be found, and demanded of them why his people dyed thus suddenly without any wounds. The Philosophers answered and said, My Lord it is no wonder: for upon the walls of that Castle within the City is a Cockatrice, through whose sight your men die, for they are infected with a venome that commeth from her eyes, and thereupon they die.

Then this Alexander asked if there were any remedy against the Cockatrice. The Philosophers answered, and said: My Lord, there is good remedy, for if it please you to set up a larg Mirrour of cleare glasse over against the Cockatrice, between your hoast and the wall of the City, when the Cockatrice beholdeth her selfe in the Mirrour, the deadly nature of her venemous sight shall return again to her self, and thus she shall die, and your men shall thereby be saved. Then the Emperor did as the Philosophers counseled him, and set up forth with a large Mirrour

of

of excellent clear glasse, and thus was the Cockatrice slain, and the Emperor with his hoast made an assault on the City, and obtained the victory.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperor may be called every Christian man, which ought to gather an hoast of vertues, for without vertue no man can fight spiritually. The Citie against which yee shall fight, is the World, wherein there is an high Castle, that is, Vanity of Vanities, and all is but Vanitie. In this Vanity standeth the Cockatrice, that is, pride of life, desire of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, wherefore this pride infecteth so many, that they die in sinne everlastingly. Wherefore the best remedy against this pride, is the consideration of our uncleannesse, how wee came naked into the World. And if it be asked why a man is proud, certainly it may bee answered thus, for default of cloathing himselfe with vertues: what shall we do when wee die thus ghostly, but set up a pure mirrour of conscience, that by that conscience we may consider our sidings: and our brittlenes, as in a glasse where we may see our own default: And if wee doe

thus

thus, without doubt the Cockatrice, that is, Pride of life, desire of the eyes, and lust of the flesh, shall be utterly destroyed, and we shall obtain the victory of this worldly City, and by Christs merits win everlasting life. Unto the which he bring us all.

The Argument.

The Soul of man being conversant in the Body, with the flesh, she seeketh by sinister means to overthrow the Soule with her unclean lusts after the World, where though the Soul for a time suffereth shipwrack of worldly felicity, yet the Lion of the Tribe of Juda is of power not only to comfort her in necessity, but also to revenge her injury, and to make her to repossesse her former estate in the World to come.

The 22. History

A Mighty Emperor sometime ruled the Romans, named Archelaus, who in his old age espoused a fair Lady, whom a young Knight loved, and had to do with her as oft as him list. It befell on a night that this Emperor bethought him in his Bed, to visit the City of Jerusalem wherefore without any more delay hee ordained

dained all things necessary for his iourney, and taking his leave of his Empresse, and of the States of his Empire went towards the said City.

When the Empresse heard this, she took the Master of the Ship aside, and said: If thou wilt consent to mee, and be true, aske of me what thou wilt, and thou shalt have it. The Master of the Ship was corrupt with covetousnesse, and said: O my dear Lady, whatsoever thou wilt command me, I shall without faile fulfill it, so that thou wilt reward me for my labour. Then said the Empresse, before thou doest ought for me, I will give thee what ever thou desirest, so that thou wilt sweare to be true to me and keep my counsel. Then the Master of the ship sware to be true to her.

Then said the Empresse: my Lord goeth with you in your ship, therefore when he is in the midst of the Sea, cast him over-board, that he may be drowned, and thou shalt have what thou wilt for thy reward. Then the Master of the ship sware a great Oath, and said: By the great God Iupiter, after he commeth once within my Ship, you shall never see him more. Then the Lady gave him as much gold as he would have, and he went to his ship.

And

And within short time after, the Emperor take shiping, and when he was in the midst of the Sea, the Master of the Ship tok the Emperor and threw him over bord into the Sea. When the Master returned again, he told the Empresse how he cast the Emperor into the Sea, whereof she was right glad.

This Emperor that was cast into the Sea, had learned in his youth to swim, and swam to an Iland in the Sea. And when he was faint, and like to be drowned, he prayed to God to be his help. At the length he came into a little Iland wherein was nothing but Lyons and Leopards, and such other beasts as swam thither from other Lands. When the Emperor had got to Land in that Ile, he espied a young Lyon fighting with an old Leopard, and the Lyon was too weake, and was almost overcome. Now the Emperor had great compassion on the Lyon, and drew out his sword, and forthwith slew the Leopard. The Lyon from that time forth followed the Emperor, and would not leave him for any thing, but every day the prey that the Lyon tok, hee brought and layd at the Emperors feet, and the Emperor smote fire on a flint stone, and broyled the body

of

of the Beast in the skinne: and thus was he fed for a long season. At length, as he walked by the Sea shore hee saw a goodly Ship come sayling by, and with a high voyce he cryed. And when the Ship-men heard the voyce, they wondred what it might be, wherefore they sayled toward him: and when they were come neere him, hee said: God friends take mee with you, and I shall pay you a good fraught. So they toke him into their Ship, and the Lyon followed him, swimming in the Sea after the Ship: and when the Lyon was neere drowned the Ship men had pitty on him, and toke him into the Ship. Now when the Emperor came to land, hee payed his fraught and went forth with the Lyon till hee came neere his owne Palace, where hee heard Trumpets, and all other Musick, and as hee marvelled what it might bee, there came from the Palace a Squire toward him, that he knew but the Squire knew not him: To whom the Emperor said thus: God friend, I pray thee tell me what is the cause of this melody. The Squire answered and said, the Empresse is married this day, and all the States of the Empire are at the feast, and therefore they make such melody. Then said the

Empe

Emperor to the Squire: where is her husband that was the Emperor before? The Squire said that he went to the Holy Land and was drowned by the way. Then the Emperor said: Sir, I pray you tell the Empresse, and the Lord that shall be her husband, that I (so please them) will shew their Maiesties rare sport with my Lyon. The Squire granted to do his errand, and went in and told his Lord and Lady, that a goodly old man was at the gate, that would shew them sport with his Lyon. Then said the new married Lady, bring him in, hee perchance may deserve meat for his play. When the Emperor with his Lion was brought in, the Lyon without any setting on ranne upon the young Knight that was newly married, and slew him, and when hee had so done, hee ranne upon the Empresse also, and devoured her to the bones, before all the Lords of the Empire. And when the Nobles saw this, they were greatly agast and began to flie. But the Emperor with his faire speech perswaded them, & said: Lo, this is the vengeance of God, for this my wife hath used Adultery long time with this Knight & lyeth dead, also shee practised my death with the Master of the

ship,

ſhip, and thereupon hee threw me into the Sea, but God ſaved me from death, and becauſe I holp once this Lyon at a need, he never forſook me ſince: and now as yee all ſee, when I came into the Pallace, without provoking of me he hath ſlain both the Adulterers, and therefore underſtand ye for truth that I am your Emperor. Now when they heard this, they looked more ſeriouſly upon him, and diſcerned him to be their Emperor, and greatly reioycing, prayſed God for that Miracle, which had ſaved their Lord and Emperour. And they lived together a long time in peace.

The Moral.

Deare Friends, by this Emperour wee may underſtand every Chriſtian man that purpoſeth to viſit the Citie of Ieruſalem, that is, to get everlaſting life through faith. But his wife, that is, the wretched fleſh, murmureth againſt the ſoule, and loveth better an Adulterer, that is, deadly ſinne, than her husband. This Emperour went into a Ship, taking his iourey towards the Citie of Ieruſalem, that is, hee went to ỹ Church of God, which is the way to God: but the wife, that is, fleſhly men, accuſed him to the maſter of the ſhip, that is,

to

to the Prelates of the Church, for great rewards, which oftentimes doe blinde the sight of many Justices, whereby many perfect men bee cast out of the ship into the Sea to be drowned, that is, out of the Church into the Sea of this world. But what shall he do then that is thus cast to be troubled in this world? certainly this ought he to doe: let him learne to Lyon, that is, let him put all his hope in God, and by his grace he shall com to an Ilande, that is the Religion of heart, and then he shall love ever the better to keepe himselfe out of this World, and therefore S. Iames saith: A pure Religion and undefiled before God, even the Father is this &c. And he that is in this Religion shall finde a Lyon, whom hee behoveth to have against the Devill. This Lyon is our Lord Jesus Christ that came of the Tribe of Iuda, who fighteth ever against the Devill: and if a man hath holpe this Lyon, ý is, hath served God against his enemies at any time, he may trust well that he will not forsake him at his need, according to the Psalmist, saying: I am with him in trouble. By this Lyon thou must tame thy wife, that is, thy flesh with repentance, and slay thy sinne, and then without doubt

thou shalt obtain the Empire of heaven: Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus. Amen.

The Argument.

The Soul of man espoused to Christ in Baptisme, yet dyeth by meanes of sinne, leaving behinde her her sonne called Reason, or rather the word of God, which searched the disease of man her sinfull father: and being sent for to cure the malady of his stepmothers Will, he refuseth to administer ghostly comfort unto her.

The 24. History.

SOmtime there dwelt in Rome a noble Emperor named Gorgony, who married a vertuous and beautiful Lady to his wife. This young Lady in due processe of time conceived and bare a Sonne, a faire and an amiable childe. When this child was ten years old, his Mother the Empresse dyed. Not long after the Emperor married another wife: The second wife could not affect or love by any meanes the Emperors Sonne, but did him all the shame and reproach that shee might. When the Emperor perceived this, wil-

ling

ling to please his wife, he exiled his son out of his Empire. And when the son was exiled, he went and studied Physick, so that within short time he was a skilfull and a cunning Physitian. It befell not long after, that the Emperor his Father, sickned and was almost at deaths doore, wherefore when he heard that his sonne was so good a Physitian he sent for him by letters, praying him that he would come to him without delay. Now the sonne willing to obey his Fathers commandement, in all haste came to him: and when he had felt his pulses, he discerned the sicknesse, and ministred physick to him, whereby he shortly recovered.

Not long after, the Empresse his stepmother began to fall sick, and many Physitians said shee would dye. And when the Emperor heard this, he sent to his sonne to help her of her sicknesse. Then said his sonne, certainly father I will lay no hand on her. Then the Emperour began to ware wroth, and said: if thou wilt not obey my commandement thou shalt henceforth depart my Empire. His sonne answered and said, If you do so (dear father) you doe unrightly, for well you know, that you exiled me out of your Empire through

her suggestion, and my absence was cause of your sickness, now my presence is cause of her sickness, and therefore I will not meddle with her, nor use any physick unto her: for oftentimes Physicions are deceived in their Patients, therefore I dare lay no hand on her, for if it would fortune her to dy, men would iudge that my physick were the cause thereof.

Then said the Emperor: she hath the very same sickness that I had. His sonne answered and said: though she have the same sickness, nevertheless you are not both of one constitution: for whatsoever I did to you, you were therewith content, and when you saw me come within the Pallace, you reioyced at my comming, and was greatly pleased with the sight of me that you begat: but when this my Stepmother saw me, she was angry, & tooke conceit in her heart, and therefore if I should but speake to her: her sorrow would much more increase, and if I should offer to touch her, she would bee in a rage. Also a Physition profiteth little except the Patient take pleasure in him. Now none can cure her of envy. And when he had spoken his minde, he took his leave and departed thence.

The Morall.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth every Christian man, which is married to Christ in the Baptisme of regeneration, for then the soul is made the Spouse of Christ, on whom our Saviour begetteth a sonne, that is, the knowledge of his Word and will. But when the childe grew to some ten years of age, or to some increase in vertu, his mother Christianity dyed: then vertue departeth from youth, and afterwards the Christian man his Father matcheth himself with another woman, the stepmother of the said youth named ignorant Envie, which in no wise could affect the Emperors sonne of knowledge wherefore she caused him to be banished into a strange Country, from his father and her both. It happned that the good Christian man, being over-ruled by his wife, falleth sick and sendeth for his son, ỳ is, knowledg of Gods word & will, to cure him as his Physician, who dutifully performeth the same. But his Stepmother falling sick at the sight of the Emperors son, though ỳ Christian man her husband labours to him to cure her as a good Physition of her Soule, yet

she not liking his good endeavour to win her from ignorant envy of the Truth, is very hardly healed of her sickness, but oftentimes dyeth in her ignorant envy and wilfull wickedness, without any hope of health or life unto eternall salvation, so that the Physitian comes thither too late.

The Argument.

Jesus Christ the Son of God ought to be cherished & fostered in our hearts by faith and good life: which is taken from us, when we are not thankfull unto him for his graces. Wherefore the Preachers of Gods Word, as good Phisitians, are sent unto us, for to admonish and warne us to persevere in amendment of life, and constant hope in Christs merits, and so to harbour him in our hearts, as he may thereby bestow on us the promotion of heavenly blisse.

The 25. History.

SOmetimes there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor named Folenus, who took to wife the Kings daughter of Germany, a fair Lady and a courteous which within short time conceived and bare a Son. When the childe was born

the States of the Empire came to the Emperor, and every one of them besought the Emperor to have the bringing up of his sonne. The Emperor answered and said: to morrow shall be a Turney and there you shall all be, and which of you doth best, and obtaineth the victory, he shall have the keeping of my son: and if he train him up well, I shall promote him to great dignity and honor, and if he do the contrary, he shall dy the foulest death that can be thought. Then said they: Most reverend Lord, all this pleaseth us well, On the morrow when every man was come to the Turny the States justed valiantly: but at length came a valiant Knight named Iosias, who so courageously bare himself there, that he obtained the victory. And immediately after the Turney was all done, this Iosias took the Child, and led him home with him. And because the Emperors son should be received with state in his Country, he sent before to his Castle, and commanded his officers that they should royally provide for him and that the childs lodging should be in the midst of the Castle, & also that the seven Sciences should bee pourtrayed about the Childes Bed, that when the Child waked out of his sleepe, he might

lye in his bed and behold the same. The Knight had a wholsome Well by the childes bed side, wherein he used to bathe himselfe, and the Knights wife bare the key of the Well, and there was a window whereat the Sunne might comfortably shine upon him. It fortuned upon a day that the Lady left open the window through negligence, which being done, thither came a Beare, and seeing the window open went to the well and bathed him therein, of whose bathing the well savoured after, through the great heat which was at that time in the hunted Beare, whereby whosoever dranke of that water waxed leprous within short time after, So it fortimed that the Lord and the Lady, with all the household by drinking of the water of that well became lepers, notwithstanding it appeared not presently. Not long after it fortuned there came a great Eagle in at the window where the Emperors son lay, & bare the child away out of the Cradle. Now when the Lord of the Castle heard this he wept bitterly & said: Alas, alas, woe is me wretched creature, that ever I was borne, what shall I do? now I am the son of death, for I am become a loathsome leper, and so is my wife with all my household,

also

also the Emperors son is lost and gone.

Now while he thus mourned, there came to him a Physition, and said: Sir if you will doe after my counsell you shall not repent you. First it behoveth you, your Wife, and all your houshold to be let bloud, and after that to be bathed and cleane washed, and then I will apply to you my medicine: and when you are whole then shall you and your houshold walke up to the mountaines, and seek the Emperors son, for the Eagle hath let him fall there in some place. Then the Lord followed the advise and counsel thus given him by the Physition, and forthwith hee and all his houshold were let bloud, and received the medicine, and within a short time after were all whole and sound. When they were thus healed, hee tooke his Horse accompanied with three men, and rode forth to seeke the Childe, and at last he found him whole and sound lying in a valley, whereat he greatly reioyced. And incontinently with great ioy and gladnesse hee led the Childe home to the Emperor his Father. Now when the Emperor saw his Son in good health, he was right glad, and promoted him to great honor. And so after hee had long time lived there in

noble

noble State, he after ended his life in peace and rest.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth the Father of Heaven. his Sonne betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, to nourish whom many men desire, at such time as they receive the Sacrament of his death and passion. He nourisheth him best, that suffereth with the Devill, and overcommeth him by godly life. This Knight that toke this Childe with him betokeneth a good Christian man, that evermore abstaineth truly from doing evil, and laboureth continually to doe good to all men. Therefore do wee as ỳ Knight did, send messengers before to prepare and make clean the Castle of our hearts, from all spots of sinne, by lively faith, and so shall this Child Jesus rest in the midst of our hearts.

The Well betokeneth mercy, which ought to be next our Lord, for whoever is without mercy and truth may not nourish ỳ blessed child Jesus: but it happeneth oft that ỳ Knights wife, ỳ is the flesh of man beareth the key of mercy, and oft leaveth that Well open, and then comes the Beare, that is, the Devill,

vill, and leaveth his loathsome filth in the Well of mercy, and who so taste th thereof shall be infected with the lepro-sie of sinne. The window wherein the Sun shined is the grace of the holy Ghost, by whom men are comforted ghostly. By this window the Eagle commeth in, that is, the flying affections of the wicked world, carrying away the knowledge of God from us, into the vale of ignorance and security, and then man hath great cause to weep, but what shall we do when the child is gone, but send for a skilfull Physition, that is, a discreet Minister of the word of God, which shall give him counsell to let him blood, and all his houshold, that is, to put out sin through acknowledging thereof, and reconciling himselfe with earnest repentance, unto his heavenly father.

Then must he bathe himselfe with teares of contrition and compunction of heart, and after that, take the medicine of amendment of life, and so live pure and cleam from all manner of sinne, and when he hath done thus, he must leape on the Palfrey of good perseve-rance from evil, and ride forth with the three men: that is, fasting from evil, praying to God, and well deserving to-wards men: then without doubt he shall finde

finde the Child Jeſus in the valley of Humility, and not on a hil, that is pride. And if ye do this, doubtleſſ he ſhall have might and power to nourith that bleſſed Child Jeſus, for whoſe nourihing the Father of heaven ſhal promote him unto everlaſting ioy. Unto the which ioy he bring us, that ſhed his precious blood for us. Amen.

The Argument.

Chriſt the giver of everlaſting glory hath proclaimed a like joy and bliſſe in heaven, as well to the poore as to the rich: But the rich oftentimes coveting al loſeth the prerogative which the poore in heart enjoy by the providence of God: Yet as he is a righteous God, he ordaineth both for the rich and poore in ſuch ſort, that if they will, they may together joyfully be ſatisfied with the great plenty of his aboundant graces.

The 26 Hiſtory.

SOmetime dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor named Fulgentius, which goberned his people Nobly, and loved them ſo much, ỹ he made proclaimacion throughout all nations, that whoſoever

would

would come to him rich or poore at a certain day, should have their petition whatsoever it were. When the mighty men heard this they were glad, and came at the day assigned, and every man put forth his petition unto the Emperor, immediatly their petitions were granted and fulfilled, insomuch that a great part of the revenewes of the Empire was distributed among them. Then every man was joyfull and went home again and took possession of such lands and Castles as the Emperor had given them.

Straight way after, the poore men in the Emperors Dominions, gathered them together, and said, a common cry was made, that whosoever came to the Emperors Pallace should have whatsoever he asked. The rich men have beene there lately, and obtained their petitions: therefore go we now, and try if we may obtaine any good of the Emperor. Now this counsel liked them all, wherefore they went to the Emperors Pallace: and there they put forth their petitions according to the Proclamation.

When the Emperor had heard them, he said to them: Dear friends, I have heard all your petitions, and it is true y

my

my proclamation was that every man indifferently, ſhould come and have their petitions, but the rich and mighty men have beene here before you, to whom I have given all that I had, ſave onely the royalty of my Lordſhip, and ſo have I nothing left to give you. Whereto the poore men ſadly replyed. Moſt gracious Soveraign have compaſſion on us, and let us not goe away empty, for we know well that it is our own default that we came not rather with theſe other rich and mighty men: but ſith it is ſo, we crave your grace, that we may obtain ſomwhat by ỹ which we may live. Then ſaid the Emperor good friends, though I have given moſt of my lands, rents, tenements, and Caſtles to ỹ rich men that came before you, nevertheleſſe, I have kept ſtill in mine owne hands the ſoveraignty and dominion over them, and that I do give to you, and ſo they ſhall be your ſeruants and be obedient to you all. And when the poore men heard this, they greatly thereat reioyced, and kneeled downe to the Emperor and thanked him ſaying, Lo, though we come late, yet we be Lords over all theſe other. And with this they tok their leave & went home again. But when the rich & mighty men

heard

heard that, they were greatly moved, and ordained a common Parliament among themselves. And thus it was spoken among them: Alas, alas, how may we serve them that somtime were but peasants and our subiects in all manner things: and now they be made Lords over us. Therefore goe we all with one assent to the Emperor, and pray him for redresse. When this was said, they forthwith went to the Emperor, and said to him, Reverend Lord what may this meane, those that were our servants erewhile: be now our Lords: wee beseech your highnesse that it may not be so.

Then said the Emperor: my good friends, I do you no wrong, for my proclamation was common, that whatsoever you asked of me you should have your petition, and you asked only of me lands & honors, & all those I have granted you to your own desires, in so much that I kept nothing for my selfe, and you were well content at your going hence. Now after that came the simple and poore men, & asked of me some boon according to my proclamation, and I had nothing to give them but onely the soveraignty and dominion over you

which

which I kept in my hands: and when the poore men cryed so to me, I gave them the authority over you, yet I see not that you can blame mee therefore: for I gave you all ỹ wealth which I had. Then said they: O dear and gracious Lord we pray you let us have your help and advise in this so dangerous a case. The Emperor answered and said: Sirs if you will follow my advise, I shall give ye good and profitable counsel. Then they said: we bee ready to fulfil whatsoever you advise us for our profit. Then said the Emperor, My loving friends, you have received of me both Lands and Tenements, and also great plenty of honours & preferments, the which by my counsel you shall impart to the poore men that they may grant unto you the Soveraignty, and that dominion which they have: When the mighty men heard this, they willingly condescended to impart their goods among the poore men, and they as willingly gave them again the authority over them, like as they had of the rich men. And thus were they both contented, and the Emperor was greatly commended of all the people, because he so well contented both parties.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, by this Emperor is understood our Lord Jesus Christ, which made a proclamation by his Prophets, Patriarks, Apostles & Preachers, that every man both poore & rich, should come and aske everlasting joy, and without doubt they shall obtain their petition. But the rich and mighty men aske for no other thing, but worldly honour and transitory riches, yet this world shall passe, and all the covetousnesse thereof: wherefore he gave them so much of worldly wealth, that he had nothing for himselfe, according to the Scripture: The birds of heaven have nests, and the Foxes of the earth have caves, but the Sonne of man hath nothing in the earth where he may put his head. Mat. 8. 20. The poore men bee the meeke in heart, of whom the Lord speaketh saying: Blessed be the poore in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. Mat. 5. 3. So it shall seeme ỹ they have soveraignty in heaven above ỹ mighty men of this world, therefore these rich men ought to impart of their temporall riches with the poore men according to the Scripture, Make you friends with riches of iniquity

quity, that when ye ſhall want, they may receive you into everlaſting habitation. Luk. 16. 9. and according to Tob. 4. 9. Give almes of thy ſubſtance: if thou haſt but a little, bee not afraid to give a little almes. And thus ye may attain unto the Kingdom of heaven. Unto the which I beſeech Almighty God bring us all.

The Argument.

The Emperor of glory, Chriſt Ieſus, hath two daughters, the one fair, the other foul; the fair daughter is the world, and the pleaſures thereof, the foul is poverty and trouble: The fair daughter is deſired of many, the foul of few, for he that loveth the world regardeth only the vanities thereof, but he that loveth God will ſuffer all perſecution and trouble for the obtaining of him.

The 27. Hiſtory.

IN Rome ſometime dwelt a Noble Emperor named Domitian, which had two Daughters, the one of them was paſſing fair, but the other foul and il-favoured: wherefore he proclaimed throughout all his Empire, that whoſo would take his fair daughter to wife, ſhould

should have nothing with her, but her beautifull and comely personage. But who so would marry his foul Daughter: should have all his Empire after his decease. Now when this Proclamacion was made, there came many Lords that desired to marry his fair Daughter. To whom the Emperor answered thus: Syrs, ye wot not what ye desire, for if ye marry her, ye shall have nothing with her but her beautiful and comely personage: and furthermore if I give her to one of you rather then to another, you will grutch, therfore if ye will nedes have her, and forsake my foul daughter, you shall iouste for her, and he that winneth her shall marry her.

Then the Nobles and States of the Empire greatly reioyced, and for the love of that beautiful Damsell they would not onely iouste, but fight also: so they set a day of battel, and many worthy men were slain on both sides, nevertheless one obtained the victory, and espoused that fair Lady.

The second daughter which was foul and ill-favoured, seing her sister so bestowed with great solemnity, wept daily, therefore the Emperor her father came to her and said. Dear daughter, why mournest thou thus: Alas deare

father, quoth ſhe, it is no wonder though I mourn, ſeeing my ſiſter is married with great honour and gladneſſe, and every man is joyfull of her, and no man careth for my company, therefore dear Father what I ſhall do I know not. Then ſaid the Emperor: O my deare daughter, all that is mine, is thine, and it is not unknowne to thee that he which married thy ſiſter had nothing with her but her beautiful corps: and therefore I ſhall proclaim in mine owne perſon through mine Empire, that what man will marry thee, I ſhall aſſure him the Empire after my decreaſe by Letters patent. When this young Lady though ſhe was foul and ilfavoured, nevertheleſſe ſhee rejoyced greatly in the promiſe of her Father. Shortly after the Proclamation was thus made, there came a proper and yong Knight, which eſpouſed the Lady, and after the death of the Emperor, he ſeazed upon all the Empire, and hee was crowned Emperor, and ſhee Empreſſe: and after that they lived together a long time in peace and reſt.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which had

two Daughters, the one faire, and the other foule: The faire Daughter betokeneth the World, which is ful fair and delectable to many men. The foul betokeneth poverty and trouble, whom few men desire to marry with. Nevertheless a Proclamation was made by the holy Scripture, that who so would have his fair Daughter, that is, the world, should have nothing with her but her fairnesse, that is, the worldly vanities, which fade and fall away like as the beauty of man: but who so will marry the foule Daughter, that is, will voluntarily receive poverty and trouble for Gods love, without doubt he shall obtain the Empire of Heaven, according to the Scripture, saying: Ye that have forsaken all things for my love, to follow me, shall have everlasting life.

Many Noble and worthy men have sought for the fair Daughter, that is, have sought and travelled by Sea and by Land in this world, for covetousnesse of worldly riches, and at length there be many slain: for there is nothing here but Pride of life, Covetousnesse of the eyes, and of the flesh, where through these grievous sinnes all the world is put to great dammage and mischiefe: So he that married the fair

Daughter, that is, the World, is he that setteth all his affections and whole desire upon the wretchednesse and vanities of this wicked world, and will not by any meanes forsake this vain world, like a wretch. But he that marrieth the foul daughter, that is the good Christian man, which for the love of the Kingdom of Heaven, and the everlasting joyes thereof, forsaketh all this world, and not onely doth thus, but also despiseth himselfe, obeying the true and everlasting God in all things. Such a man certainly shall obtain the joyfull and happy Empire of Heaven: Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus, Amen.

The Argument.

Devotion, Prayer and Thankesgiving unto God for his gifts, is a sweet sounding Musick, delectable in the eares of God. we are hereby warned after our first offending not to returne to our vomit, with the Dog, nor after washing, with the sow to wallow in the mire: no rather let us bathe our selves in the Wel of sorrowful & hearty repentance, in perseverance in good life, that wee may live with Christ in everlasting joy and blisse.

The

The 29. History.

IN Rome sometime dwelt a mighty Emperor named Andromicha, the which above all things loved Musick, This Emperor had within his Palace a Well of such vertue, that whosoever were drunke, by drinking the water thereof, should incontinently become fresh again, and be delivered from all kinde of dizines. There was also dwelling in the Emperors Court a Knight named Ydronic, whom the Emperor loved much, but oft times he would be drunke, which vice the Emperor hated above all things. And when this Knight perceived himselfe drunke, then would he goe to the well and drink of that water and so refresh himselfe, so that whatsoever the Emperor said to him he would answer him so reasonably, that no drunkennesse might be seen in him, and for his witty answers he was greatly beloved of the Emperor. Nevertheless his fellows sought to draw the Emperors love from him.

It fortuned on a day that this Emperor went to the Forrest where he heard a Nightingale sing right pleasantly: oftentimes after he would rise early in the

morning, and sometime from his meat and walk into the wood to hear her swet song: wherefore many of his men said among themselves: our Lord delighteth so much in the Nightingals song, that he reckoneth nothing our profit, insomuch that through two things his love is withdrawn from us, ỳ is, by Ydrony the Knight, and by ỳ swet song of the Nightingale. Then said an old Knight that was among them: Sirs goeth hee if you will follow my counsel, I shall deliver you of the Knight Ydrony, and of the Nightingale without hurt or death. Then they answered and said, whatsoever you advise us to doe we shall straight way fulfil it with all our hearts. When the Knight heard this, within a while after he chanced to espye this Knight Ydrony drunke, wherefore he locked fast the well, so when this Knight Ydrony came to refresh himselfe he found the Well fast locked.

Now the Emperor had a great businesse to treat of, wherefore in haste he sent for this Knight, because of his great wisdom to have his counsel. And when he came before the Emperor, he was so drunk ỳ he could not move his tongue, neither had wit, reason nor understanding to answer ỳ Emperor to his matter.

But

But when the Emperor saw this, he was greatly vexed, forasmuch as he hated that vice: wherefore he commanded anon that from that day forward he should no more be seen within his Land upon pain of death.

This hearing his foes, they rejoyced, and said unto the old Knight: Now wee bee delivered of this Knight Ydrony, there is no more to do, but that we may finde a way to bee delivered also of the Nightingale, in which the Emperor delighteth so much.

Then said the old Knight, your ears shall heare, and your eyes shall see this Nightingale shall bee destroyed shortly.

Not long after, this old Knight espied that the Nightingale used to sit upon a tree even above the foresaid Well, whereas her Mate came and coupled with her, nevertheless in the absence of her Mate, shee tooke oftentimes another Mate and coupled with him: When she had thus done, then would she descend to the well to bathe her selfe, that when her Mate came hee should feel no evill savour or scent of that shee had done. When the Knight had seen this on a time he locked the Well, and when

the

the Nightingale would have descended to bathe her selfe, after the coupling with the other Mate, she found the well closed: wherefore she flew up into the tree again and mourned sore in her manner, and left her song. Then came her Mate and saw that she had done against her nature, he returned again, & in short time brought a great multitude of Nightingals which slew his Mate, and tare her all in pieces.

And thus was the wise Knight put away and the Nightingall slaine, and the Emperor put from his pleasure, and disappointed of the great comfort he was wont to have.

The Morall

Dear Friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, which loveth greatly the Song of devotion, for when we pray we speak unto God, & when we read God speaketh unto us. The Well that was in the Pallace betokeneth acknowledging of our sinnes to God. Therefore if any bee drunke with sinne, let him drink of the Wel of acknowledging of his sinnes, and without doubt hee shall be safe. This Ydronie betokeneth every man that wilfully returneth again to sinne after his

is acknowledging sin, like as the Dog that maketh a vomit, and casteth up the meat that he hath eaten before, and afterward when he is hungry, commeth and eateth it again. Nevertheless, if a man that hath thus sinned, will drink of the Well of acknowledging his sinne, he shall receive his ghostly strength. The Nightingale that sate on the tree betokens the soul that sitteth on the tree of holy doctrine. And her song betokeneth the Soul that sitteth on the tree of devout prayers to God. But this soul doth commit evil as oft as she consenteth to sinne. Nevertheless, if she run to the Well of acknowledging of sin and bathe her with the water of contrition, God shall love her.

But her foes, that is, the fiends of hell, seeing this, that God is merciful, they stop the Well of acknowledgement of sinne, that is, they would withdraw us from dutifull acknowledgement, and from due reconciliation of our selves betwen us and God, and betwen us and man, without shame and dread of repentance, not to declare our sins. And thus through the temptations of the Devill our adversary, many have been exiled and put to death everlastingly. And therefore study

wee

wée to bathe our soules in this life in the well of acknowledgment of sinne, with the water of contriction, and then we shall be sure in the world to come to have joy everlasting. Unto the which God bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

The Soul of every good Christian man ought to prepare armed vertues for to withstand the assaults of the Devil. We are here put in minde of our deliverance from death by the precious bloud-shed of Iesus Christ: which is a terror to all the Devils in hell, if we continue in faith and believe in him the bulwark of our salvation.

The 21 History.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperour named Hermes, which had a mighty strong City exceeding strongly walled about, and a Bell hanging in the midst of the said City, and whensoever the Emperour went to any battell without the City, this Bell was ever rung, but there did no man ring the Bell, but a Virgin. Within short time after it befell that Dragons, Serpents, and also many other venemous

ns Beasts imprisoned much people, that the City was almost destroyed: herefore the States of the City ent with one assent to the Emperor, nd said: Lord what shall we doe? Lo, ur people, our goods, and our City s almost destroyed, and you and we be n peril to perish, through these cruell easts that consume us, therefore take n good counsell, or else we are undone. Then said the Emperor: what think ou is best to be done in this matter, nd how may wee be best defended? Then answered one of the wisest and aid: My Lord, heare my counsell, nd doe thereafter, and you shall not epent it. You have in your Pallace a Lyon, set up a peece of timber for he purpose, and thereunto let the Lyon e nailed and made fast, and when o- her venemous beasts see him thus used hey will be afraid, and forsake our Ci- y, and we shall be in safetie. Then said the Emperor, it pleaseth me well hat he be so used, thereby to save you. Then they tooke the Lyon and and used him in like manner as afore- said, which when the other beasts saw they fled away for feare, and never more afterwards durst they come thi- ther.

The

The Morall.

Dear Friends, this Emperor be-
keneth the Father of Heaven, the C-
ty well walled, with a Well in
midſt betokeneth the Soul walled ab-
with vertues. The Vel betokeneth
clean Conſcience that warneth a m-
to Battel, when he ſhould fight agai-
the Devil that he might arme himſe-
before with vertues. The Virg-
that ſhould alwayes ring this Vel
Reaſon, which as a Virgin incline-
unto all rightful cleannesſe. The ve-
nemous Dragon that beareth the fir-
betokeneth the fleſh of man, which bu-
eth the fire of Covetouſneſſe, whi-
burnt Adam our fore-father, when
eat of the forbidden Apple. The ven-
mous Beaſt that poyſoned the men be-
tokeneth the fiends of hell, which
the moſt part have deſtroyed all ma-
kinde. The States of the City bet-
ken the Patriarkes & Prophets, whi-
beſought God of counſel and remedy
that mankinde might be ſaved, and
anon it was counſelled for the beſt re-
medy that a Lyon (that is Chriſt) ſho-
be nayled upon the Croſſe, according
the Scripture, ſaying thus, It was re-
quiſite that one man ſhould dy for the
people

people, least all flesh should perish. Then took they Christ, and hung him on the Crosse, for the which the Devill dreadeth Christian people, and dares not come nigh them. And thus by the grace of God, Christian men shall come to everlasting blisse. Unto the which bring us the Lamb of God, which shed his precious blood for us. Amen.

The Argument.

Here is signified the thraldome of man unto Sathan by sin, till Christ the Son of God descended, with the power of the holy ghost, to set him at liberty, and put him in possession of the pallace of everlasting felicity.

The 20. History.

THere dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperor and a merciful named Menelay, who ordained such a Law, that what nocent person were taken and put in prison, if he might escape and come to the Emperors pallace, he should be there safe from all manner accusations against him in his life time. It was not long after, but it befel that a Knight was accused, wherefore he was taken and put in a strong & darke

prison

prison where he lay long time, and had no light but a little window, whereat scant light shon in, that lighted him to eate such simple meat as was brought him by his keeper: wherefore he mourned greatly, and made sorrow that hee was thus fast shut up from the sight of men. Nevertheless when the keeper was gone, there came daily a Nightingale in at the window, & sung full sweetly, by whose song this wofull Knight was oftentimes fed with joy, and when this bird left off singing, then would she flie into the Knights bosome, and there this Knight fed her many a day of the victuall that God sent him. It befel after upon a day, that the Knight was greatly desolate of comfort. Nevertheless the bird that sate in his bosome, fed upon kernels of nuts, and thus he said to the Bird: sweet Bird I have sustained thée many a day, what wilt thou give me now in my desolation to comfort me? remember thy selfe well how that thou art the creature of God, and so am I also, and therefore help me now in this my great néed.

When the Bird heard this, she flew forth from his bosome, & tarryed from him three days, but ỳ third day she came

again

again, and brought in her mouth a precious stone, and laid it in the Knights bosome. And when she had so done, shee toke her flight, and flew from him again. The Knight marvelled at ỳ stone and at the Bird, and forthwith he took the stone in his hand, and touched his gyves and fetters therewith, and presently they fell off. And then he arose and touched the doores of the prison, and they opened, and so he escaped and ran fast to the Emperors Pallace. When the keeper of the prison perceived this, he blew his horne thrice, and raised up all the folk of the City, and led them forth, crying with an high voyce: Loe the theefe is gone, follow we him all. And with ỳ he ran before all his fellows toward the Knight, and when he came nigh him, the Knight bent his bow, and shot an arrow, wherewith he smot the keeper in the lungs and slew him, and then ran to the Pallace, where he found succour against the Law.

The Morall.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, who ordained a Law, that what Innocent, that is, what person imprisoned wrongfully, and might escape & come to the Pallace

of his heavenly habitation through repentance and true amendement of life, ſhould finde perpetual ſuccour and help. This Knight betokeneth every one that is innocent, and accuſed by envie or malice unjuſtly, taking griefe for his preſent eſtate. The keeper of this priſon betokeneth the Devill, that keepeth ſuch a man hard bound by ſinne, and ſerveth him with riches and delights of this tranſitory world, that he ſhould not eſcape from danger.

The Bird that ſingeth ſo ſweetly, betokeneth ỹ voyce of Heaven, that ſayth to the oppreſſed: Turne againe, now turn again thou Priſoner, that is, turn again thou oppreſſed, and I ſhall receive thee to grace. For when mankind was in thraldome to Sathan in the priſon of hell, then came there a Bird, that is, the God-head, bearing with him a ſtone that betokens our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, according to the holy Scripture, ſaying: I am a ſtone.

The ſoul of Chriſt deſcended with the God-head, and brought with him all mankinde out of the priſon of hell, therefore if any of us be in the priſon of worldly oppreſſion, touch we our ſins with the ſtone, that is, with the vertue of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by acknowledging

ledging our sin in faithful Prayer, and by true contrition, and then without doubt the chaines of our oppression, with the stone, shall be broken, and fall from us, and the dores of heavenly grace shall be opened, and we shall obtain help and succour in the Pallace of the heavenly habitation.

And if the keeper of the prison, that is, the Devill, (which is the blower of the horn of pride, lechery, or covetousnesse) stir in us any sins, then turne we towards him manfully, and shoot at him the arrow of constant Faith in Jesus Christ, by true & unfained repentance, and without doubt he shall flie from us: and then by the grace of Almighty God we may obtain the Pallace of heavenly blisse, where wee shall behold the King of all glory. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ Amen.

The Argument.

A poore man exalted to dignity, is here admonished not to be unthankfull, and to render evill for good: but even to the most simple ones to bee gratefull for any benefit, else surely God that gives thee this promotion, will make the brutish creatures of the earth

thy enemies, and depoſe thee from thy dignity, and he that hath helped thee, be he never ſo baſe, may in the end have better favour with God and man than thy ſelfe; wherefore be warned of ingratitude by this example, and know thy ſelfe, thy God, and thy friend.

The 29. Hiſtory.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor named Ebolides, It fortuned on a day that this Emperor, walked into a great Forreſt to take his pleaſure, where he met ſuddenly with a poore man, and ſo ſoon as this Emperor ſaw him, he was greatly moved with mercy, and ſaid: Good friend, whence art thou? My ſoveraign Lord, quoth he I am your ſubiect borne in your Land, and am now in great poverty. Then ſaid the Emperor: If I knew that thou wert true in every thing, I would promote thée to great riches, therefore tell me, what is thy name.

My Lord, quoth he, I am called Lentulus, and I promiſe you to do you true ſervice, and if I do otherwiſe, I ſubmit my ſelfe unto all manner of puniſhment that you can put me to. When the Emperor heard that, he promoted him incontinently

continently to great riches, and shortly after he made him a Knight, and Steward of his Land. And when he was thus exalted to honour, he waxed very proud, insomuch that he despised both his superiors and inferiors: Not long after this Steward rode by a Forrest, where he met with the Foster, and charged him that he should make an hundred pits in the ground, and cover them over with green grasse and small boughs, that if wild Beasts fortuned to go to the Forrest that way, they might fall in, and so being taken be brought to the Emperor. The Foster answered and said: Sir, as you have said it shall be done. Not long after it fortuned that this Steward rode to this Forrest again to see if these pits were made, and as he rode he bethought himselfe how wealthy a man, and how mighty in power he was made & how most men in the Empire obeyed him, and were at his command. As he rode thus thinking, he said to himselfe: There is no man greater then I, & with that he smote his Horse with the spurs, and sodainly he fell into one of the deepe pits, that he himselfe had ordained before for the wild beasts, & for the great deepnesse thereof he could not rise again by any manner of means, wherefore he

languished in great perplexity: and straight way after him came a fierce Lyon, and fell into the same pit, and after the Lyon an Ape, and after the Ape a Serpent. When the Steward was thus beset with these beasts, he was exceedingly afraid.

Then was at that time dwelling in y City a poore man named Guy, that had no riches save only an Asse, whereon daily he carried sticks and wood that fell from trees, and such as he could get in the Forrest, and those he brought to the Market and sold them: and in this wise sustained himselfe and his wife as long as he might,

It fortuned that this poore Guy went to the Forrest as he was wont, and as he came by the deep pit, he heard a man cry and say, O dear friend, what art thou? for Gods sake help me, and I shall recompence thee so well, that thou shalt ever after be the better. When this poore Guy heard that it was the voyce of a man, he marvelled greatly, & stood still on the pits brink, & said: Lo, good friend I am come, why hast thou called me? Then said the Knight, Dear friend, I am Steward of all the Emperors Land, and thus by fortune I am fallen into the pit, and here be with me

thre Beasts, that is, a Lyon, an Ape, and an horrible Serpent, which I fear most of all, and I wot not of which of them I shall be devoured: therefore I pray thee get a long Rope, wherewith thou maist draw me out of this deep pit. and I will make thee rich for ever hereafter: for if I have not help ỹ rather, I shall be devoured of these cruel Beasts.

Then said this poore Guy, I may fall ill at this time intend to help thee. For I have nothing to live on, but that I gather wood, and carry it to the Market to sell, wherewith I am sustained. Nevertheless I will leave my purposed labour, and fulfill thy will, and if thou reward me not, it will be great hindrance to me and to my poore wife. Then the Steward made a great oath, and said, I will promote thee and all thine to great wealth. Then said Guy, if you will performe your promise, I shall do what you command me. And with that he went again to the City and bought there a long Rope, and came to the Pit again, and said: Sir Steward, loe here I let down a Rope to thee, binde thy selfe about the middle therewith, that I may pull thee up. Then was the Steward glad, and said: Good friend let down the Rope: and with

ſhat he caſt the end of the rope down in-
to the pit. And when the Lyon ſaw it,
he caught the rope and held faſt, and
Guy drew up the Lyon, weening in
himſelfe he had drawn up the Steward,
and when he had ſo done, the Lyon thank-
ed him in his manner, and ranne to the
wood. The ſecond time that Guy let
down the rope the Ape leapt to it, and
caught it faſt, and when he was drawn
up, he thanked Guy in his manner and
ran to the wood. The third time he let
down the rope, he drew up the Ser-
pent, which thanked him and went to the
wood. Then the Steward cried with a
high voyce: O dear friend, now I am
deliuered of theſe three ranenous beaſts
let down the rope to me that I may come
up. Then this poore Guy let down the
rope, and the Steward bound himſelfe
faſt about the middle, and Guy drew
him up. And when he was thus holp
out of the pit, he ſaid to Guy as follow-
eth.

Come to me to morrow to the Pallace
and then I will reward thee. Then
poore Guy reioyced therat, & went home
without any reward. Then his wife de-
manded of him why he gathered no wood
whereby they might liue that day.
Then told he her of the event as it befel

how

how the Steward fell into a Pit, (and also the Lyon, the Ape, and the Serpent) that he had made in the said Forrest, & how he had holpen him out with a rope, and saved him from being devoured of the three venomous beasts: and that he should goe to the Steward, and fetch his reward on the morrow. When his wife heard this she reioyced greatly and said: If it shall bee so, pray you rise to morrow at a due houre, and go to the Pallace, and receive your reward that we may be comforted thereby.

So in the morning Guy arose, and went to the Pallace, and knocked at the gate: then came the Porter, and asked the cause of his knocking. I pray thee, quoth this Guy, go to the Steward and say to him that here abideth a poore man at the gate that spake with him yesterday in the Forrest. The Porter went and told the Steward as the poore man had said. Then said the Steward Go you again and tell him that he lyeth, for yesterday spake I with no man in the Forrest, and charge him that he goe away & trouble me no more. The Porter went forth and told poore Guy what the Steward had said, & charged him to go away. Then was this poore Guy sorrowful, and went home, & when he was

come

come home, he told his wife how the Steward answered him. His wife comforted him in all that she might, and said Goe you again and prove him thrice. Then on the morrow, this Guy arose and went to the Pallace again, praying ỳ Porter to do his errand once again to ỳ Steward: The Porter answered & said, gladly would I do ỳ errand, but I fear me sore it will be to thy hurt, then went he in & told the Steward that this poore man was again returned. When the Steward heard that, he went out, and all to beat poore Guy, and left him in perill of death. When his wife heard this, she came with her Alle and led him home as she might, and all that she had, she spent on Surgeons & Physitians to help him. And when he was perfectly whole, he went to the forrest as he was wont for to gather sticks and small wood for his living. And as he went in the Forrest, he saw a Lyon driving before him ten Alles that were laden with rich Jewels and Marchandise. This Lyon drove forth the Alles before Guy, which feared him sore, lest he should have devoured him, nevertheless when he beheld the Lyon better, he knew well that it was the same Lyon that he drew out of the pit.

This

This Lyon left not Guy till all the Asses with the marchandise were entred into his yard, and then the Lyon did him obeysance, and ran to the wood.

Then Guy searched the fardels, and found great riches therein, wherefore he made Proclamation in divers Churches, if any man had lost such goods, he should have them again, but there was none that challenged them. And when Guy saw this, he sold the goods, and bought therewith House and Land, and so was made rich. Nevertheless he went to the Forrest, as he did before. And as he was in the Forrest gathering wood, he spied the Ape on the top of a tree, breaking boughes busily with her teeth and clawes, and throwing them down, so that in short time Guy had loaded his Asse. And when the Ape had so done, she went her way, and Guy went home.

Now Guy on the morrow went to the Forrest again, and as he sate binding his Faggots, he saw the Serpent that he drew out of the pit, come toward him bearing in her mouth a precious stone of three colours, which she let fall at Guyes feet, and when shee had thus done, she kissed his foot, and went her way. Then Guy tooke up the Stone

and

and marvelled greatly of what vertu it might be: wherfore he rose up and went to a Jeweller named Peter, and said: Dear Brother, I pray thee tell me the vertue of this precious Stone, and I shall reward thee for thy labour. When this Jeweller had well beheld and understood the nature of the Stone, hee said: God friend, if thou list to sell the Stone, I shall give thee an hundred Markes for it. Then said Guy, I will not sell the Stone till thou tell me truly the vertues thereof. Then said the Jeweller, without doubt this Stone hath three vertues: the first vertue is ỳ whosoever beareth this Stone about him, shal have joy without sorrow: the second vertue is, that he shall have plenty without want: the third vertue is, he shall have light without darkness: and it hath also another vertue, that no man may sell it but for as much as it is worth, and if he doe the contrary, the Stone returneth again to the first owner. When Guy heard this, hee was right joyfull, and said to himselfe, in a good hour I drew those Beasts out of the pit.

Not long after it befel that this Guy by the vertu of ỳ Stone was made passing rich, and bought great possessions & livings,

lyings, wherefore within a while hee was made Knight. It was not long after but the Emperor had knowledge how Sir Guy had a stone of such vertu, wherefore he sent for Sir Guy, comanoting him to come to him in all haste, & so he did. And when Sir Guy was come to the Emperor, the Emperor said to him: My friend, I have heard say, that sometime thou wert in great poverty, and now thou art made rich by the vertue of a little stone, therefore I pray thee that thou sell me that stone, Sir Guy answered and said, that may I not doe, for so long as I have that stone, I am sure of three things, that is of ioy without sorrow, plenty without want, and light without darknesse. When the Emperor heard this, he had a greater desire to buy the stone then he had before, and said to him: Sir Guy, of two things thou must chuse one, that is, whether thou wilt forsake the Empire, and all thy kindred, or else sell me the stone. Then said sir Guy, My Lord, if it must needs be thus, be it at your will Nevertheless, I shall tell you the property of this stone, if you pay not for it as it is worth, without doubt it will come to me again. Then the Emperor said, surely I will give sufficiēt, for thou

shalt

shall receive of me therefore a thousand pound, and so it was done. Sir Guy received the money and went home.

On the morrow early he opened the coffer, and found the Stone, and then he told to the Lady his wife, how hee had found in his Coffer the Stone which he sold to the Emperor. Then said his wife, good Sir, haste you unto the Emperor again, and give him the stone, lest he bee displeased, and through malice repute some deceit in us.

Then went Sir Guy again to the Emperor, and said to him: My Lord, yesterday I sould you a Stone, which if it please you I would fain see. The Emperor went for the Stone, to his Treasury, but found it not, wherefore he was right sorrowfull, and came again and told Sir Guy how it was lost. Then said Sir Guy, My Lord grieve you not: for I told you yesterday that I might not sell it except I had the valne thereof, and yesterday I received a thousand pound of you therefore, and this day I found it in my Coffer again, and therefore if I had not brought the stone again, peradventure you would have shewed me your heavy countenance and with that he shewed forth the stone, whereat the Emperor marvelled great-

ly;

ly and said, Sir Guy, by the faith that thou owest to me, tel me how thou comest by this stone. Then said sir Guy, by the faith that I owe to you, I shall tell you the very truth as touching this stone. Your Steward that is promoted up of nought, caused many deep pits to be made in your Forrest, and it fortuned that he not long after fell into one of them himselfe, and through the deepnesse thereof could not rise again. It chanced also the same day, that a Lyon an Ape, and a Serpent, fell into the Pit with him, at which time I was a very poore man, and toke great pains for my living, and as I walked into the Forrest with mine Asse to gather wood, he cryed to me for to help him out of the Pit, and save him from death, for there were in the Pit with him three venomous beasts, that is, a Lyon, an Ape, and a foul Serpent, and then he promised me by his word, to promote me & all my kindred to great riches: which when I heard I was right glad, and let down a rope unto him, supposing to have drawn him up, and haled a Lyon, and after that an Ape, and after a Serpent, and at the last your Steward.

The Lyon gave me ten Asses laden with Marchandise, the Ape gave me as much

much wood as mine Aſſe might beare, and the Serpent gave me this ſtone that I have ſold you, but your Steward beat me, and wounded me ſo ſore for my good will, that I was borne home upon mine Aſſe.

When the Emperor heard this, his heart was moved greatly againſt the Steward, wherefore he examined him of that falſe déed: but he was dumb, and would not ſpeak, for ſo much that hee could not denie his ingratitude.

Then ſaid the Emperor: O thou wretched creature! unreaſonable beaſts as the Lyon, the Ape, and the Serpent, rewarded him for his good déed, & thou that art a reaſonable man haſt almoſt beaten him to death that ſaved thée, and took thée out of the pit, therefore for thy falſhood and wickedneſſe I judge thée to be hanged this day on the Gallowes, and all thy Goods and Lands I grant to Sir Guy: and alſo I ordain that Sir Guy ſhall occupy thy place, and bée my Steward: and ſo it was done. When Sir Guy was thus rewarded by the Emperor, and made Steward, hee was well beloved of every man as long as he lived, and at the laſt ended his life with honour in peace.

The

The Morall

This Emperor betokeneth the Father of heaven, the poore man betokeneth every man that commeth into this World, and at last is promoted to great riches and worldly honour, as the Psalmist saith: God lifteth the poore man out of the myre. But many such men neither know God nor themselves, but cause deep pits to be made, that is, unkindnesse and malice, they ordain against simple men, into the which pits the Devill oft causeth them to fall, according to the Text in Ecclesiasticus: Who maketh a pit for another man, himselfe falleth therein: which Text was well proved by Haman, who caused the gallowes to be set up for Mordacheus, but was hanged thereon himself. This Guy that went daily to the Forrest with his Asse to gather wood, betokens every iust and godly man, fearing God in the Forrest of this world: his wood that hee gathereth, betokeneth his faith and good workes, which hee carrieth upon his Asse, humane Endeavour, whereby his soul may have joy, and live in the tabernacle of heaven. And as the Steward, the Lion, the Ape, and the Serpent fell into the pit, right so a sinfull man falleth into the pit of sinne:

But the Lyon of the Tribe of Iuda (that is Jesus Christ) descended with him as oftentimes as the sinner hath will to come to grace. Therefore, saith the Psalmist, I am with him in tribulation. This Guy draweth up the Lyon that is, mans Soule out of the pit, by the cord of vertues: he drew up the Ape also, that is, contrary will to reason, that he may obey to reason: for of all manner of beasts the Ape is most like to man, right as among all the strengths of the soul, discretion ought to be linked with reason, and to obey reason. He drew up also a Serpent, by which is to bee understood repentance, for two causes: for as the Serpent beareth in his mouth venome, and in his taile a medicine: right so, repentance beareth at the beginning bitternesse to the doer, yet it is swæt and medicinable unto the Soul at the end, and therefore every iust man should draw to him the Serpent of repentance. Then at the last he drew up the Steward from the pit of sin, according unto Christs saying, I am come not onely to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. Also it is written that Seneca the Philosopher, taught an Emperor many Lawes and Vertues of truth, & at last as this Steward did, he sought

sought the death of Seneca. Also Christ gave power to Iudas to work miracles, as he did to the other Disciples, yet he betrayed him at last: Right so, now adayes many children of Belial delight more to do harm then good, specially to them that would instruct them perfectly both for the soul and body.

The Lyon gave to the iust and godly poor man ten Asses laden with marchandise: that is, our Lord Jesus Christ gives unto every righteous man ten Commandements charged with vertues, by which he groweth to the riches of Heaven. The Ape also gathereth him wood as oft as the iust man worketh the fruits of faith: for wood necessarily is profitable for two uses, that is to make fire, and to build houses. Even so charity reioyceth God and Angels in heaven, according to the Scripture, More joy is among Angels for one sinner that repenteth, &c. Charity also raiseth the house of Heaven, against the comming of the soul. The Serpent also gave him a stone of three divers colours, which betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we seek by Repentance. Therefore saith Saint Ierome in his second Table thus: We should repent us after our shipwrack.

That Chriſt is the Stone, may be proved by himſelf saying: I am a living Stone: Chriſt hath three colours, which betoken the power of the Father, the wiſdom of the Son, and the humility of the holy Ghoſt: Therefore, who so may get this precious Stone, ſhall have the Empire of Heaven, joy without ſorrow, plenty without want, and light without darkneſſe. Unto which bring us our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Amen.

The Argument.

By the Nativity of Chriſt proceedeth joyful gladneſs to the world and ſalvation unto mankinde. Yet is man unthankful unto God, contrary to his promiſe made in Baptiſm. We are warned in all wordly tempeſts continually to cleave to Chriſt by Faith and Hope, to continue in weldoing, and to withſtand the malice of the Devil: the Preachers of Gods Word are ſent of God to confound the Devil by ſound Doctrine, and good life. Life and death is ſet before men: we ought then to chuſe that life that may be for our everlaſting comfort.

The

The 32 History.

SOmetimes dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor named Anselme, who had married the Kings daughter of Ierusalem, a fair Lady and a gracious in the sight of every man, but she was long time with the Emperor ere she bare him any child, wherefore the Nobles of the Empire were very sorrowful because their Lord had no Heir of his own body begotten. Till at last it befel that this Anselme walked after supper in an evening, into his garden, and bethought himself that he had no Heir, and how the King of Ampluy warred on him continually, for so much as he had no son to make defence in his absence, therefore he was sorrowful and went to his chamber and slept. Then he thought he saw a vision in his sleep, that the morning was more clear then it was wont to be, and that the Moon was much paler on the one side then on the other. And after he saw a bird of two colours, and by that bird stood two beasts which fed that little bird with their heat. And after that came many mo beasts, and bowing their breasts toward the bird, went their way. Then came there divers birds that sung so sweetly and plea-

ſantly that the Emperor awaked. In the morning early this Anſelme remembred his viſion, and wondred much what it might ſignifie, wherefore he called to him his Philoſophers, and alſo the States of the Empire, and told them his dream, charging them to tell him the ſignification thereof, upon pain of death, and if they told him true interpretation thereof, he promiſed them great reward. Then ſaid they: dear Lord, tell us your dream, and we ſhall declare unto you what it betokens. Then the Emperor told them from the beginning to the ending, as it is aforeſaid. When the Philoſophers heard this, with glad chear they anſwered and ſaid: Sir, the viſion that you ſaw betokeneth good, for the Empire ſhall be clearer then it is.

The Moon that is more pale on the one ſide then on the other, betokeneth the Empreſſe that hath loſt part of her colour, through the conception of a Son that ſhe hath conceived. The little bird betokeneth the ſon that ſhe ſhall bear. The two beaſts that feed this bird betoken the wiſe and rich men of the Empire, which ſhall obey the Son. Thoſe other beaſts that bowed their breaſts to the bird, betoken many other Nations

that

that shall do him homage. The bird that sang so sweetly to the little bird, betokeneth the Romans, who shall reioyce and sing because of his birth. This is the very interpretation of your dream.

When the Emperor heard this, he was right ioyful. Soon after that, the Empresse travelled in child-birth and was delivered of a fair Son, at whose birth there was great and wonderful ioy made.

When the King of Ampluy heard this, he thought in himself thus: Lo, I have warred against the Emperor all the days of my life, and now he hath a son, who when he commeth to full age, will revenge the wrong I have done against his Father, therefore it is better that I send to the Emperor and beseech him of truce and peace, that his son may have nothing against me when he commeth to manhood. When he had thus said to himself, he wrote to the Emperor, beseeching him to have peace. When the Emperor saw that the King of Ampluy wrote to him more for fear then for love, he wrote again to him, that if he would find good and sufficient sureties to keep the peace, and bind himself all the days of his life to do him service and homage, & to give him yearly a cer-

tain tribute, he would receiue him to peace.

When the King had read the tenor of the Emperors Letter, he called his Councel, praying them to giue him counsel how he might best do as touching this matter. Then said they, It is good that ye obey the Emperors will and commandement in all things. For first, in that he desired of you surety for the Peace: to this we answer thus: We haue but one daughter, and the Emperor one son, wherefore let a marriage be made between them, and that may be a perpetual Couenant of Peace. Also he asketh homage and tribute, which it is good to fulfil. Then the King sent his messengers to the Emperor, saying, that he would fulfil his desire in all things, if it might please his Highnesse that his son and the Kings daughter might be married together. All this well pleased the Emperor, yet he sent again, saying, if his daughter were a clean virgin from her birth unto that day, he would consent to that marriage. Then was ỹ King right glad, for his daughter was a clean virgin

Therefore when the Letters of Couenant and compact were sealed, the King furnished a fair Ship wherein he might send his daughter, with many noble

Knights,

knights, Ladies, and great riches, unto the Emperor, for to have his son in marriage.

And when they were sayling in the sea towards Rome, a storm arose so extreamly and so horribly, that the ship brake against a Rock, and they were all drowned, save only the yong Lady, which set her hope and heart so greatly on God that she was saved. And about three of the clock the tempest ceased, and the Lady drave forth over the waves in that broken ship which was cast up again: but a huge Whale followed after ready to devoure both the ship & her. Wherefore this yong Lady when night came smote fire with a stone, wherewith the ship was greatly lightned, and then the Whale durst not adventure toward the ship for fear of the light. At the Cock crowing, this yong Lady was so weary of the great tempest and trouble of the sea, that she slept, and within a little while after the fire surceased, and the Whale came and devoured the Virgin. And when she awaked and found her self swallowed up in the Whales belly, she smote fire, and with a knife wounded the Whale in many places, and when the Whale felt himself wounded, according to his nature, he begun to swim to Land.

There

There was dwelling at that time in a country near by, a noble Earl, named Pirris, who for his recreation walking on the sea-shore, saw the Whale comming towards the land, wherefore he turned home again, and gathered a great many of men and women, and came thither again, & fought with the Whale, and wounded him very sore, and as they smote, the Mayden that was in his belly cryed with an high voyce, and said: O gentle friends have mercy and compassion on me, for I am a Kings daughter, and a true virgin from the hour of my birth to this day. When the Earl heard this, he wondred greatly, and opening the side of the Whale found the young Lady, and took her out. And when she was thus delivered, she told him forthwith whose daughter she was, and how she had lost all her goods in the sea, and how she should have been married unto the Emperors son. And when the Earl heard this, he was very glad, and comforted her the more, and kept her with him till she was well refreshed. And in the mean time he sent messengers to the Emperor, letting him to know how the Kings daughter was saved.

Then was the Emperor right glad of her

her safety and comming, and had great compassion on her, saying: Ah good maiden, for the love of my son thou hast suffered much wo: nevertheless if thou be worthy to be his wife, soon shall I prove. And when he had thus said, he caused three vessels to be brought forth: the first was made of pure gold, well beset with precious stones without, and within full of dead mens bones, and thereupon was ingraven this Posey, Who so chuseth me, shall find that he serveth. The second vessel was made of fine silver, filled with earth and worms, and the superscription was thus: Who so chuseth me, shall find that his nature desireth. The third vessel was made of Lead, full within of precious stones, and thereupon was insculpt this Posey: Who so chuseth me, shall find that God hath disposed for him. These three vessels the Emperor shewed the Maiden, and said: Lo here daughter, these be rich vessels, if thou chuse one of these wherein is profit to thee and to others, then shalt thou have my Son. And if thou chuse that wherein is no profit to thee nor to any other, soothly thou shalt not marry him.

When the Maid heard this, she lift up her hands to God & said, Thou Lord, that

that knowest all things, grant me grace this hour so to chuse, that I may receive the Emperors Son. And with that she beheld the first vessel of gold which was engraven royally, and read the superscription: Who so chuseth me, &c. saying thus: though this vessel be full precious, and made of pure gold, nevertheless I know not what is within, therefore my dear Lord, this vessel will I not chuse.

And then beheld she the second vessel, that was of pure silver, and read the Superscription: Who so chuseth me shall finde that his nature desireth, Thinking thus within her self, if I chuse this vessel what is within I know not, but well I know there shall I finde that Nature desireth, and my nature desireth the lust of the flesh, and therefore this vessel will I not chuse.

When she had seen these two vessels and had given an answer as touching them, she beheld the third vessel of Lead, and read the Superscription: Who so chuseth me, shall finde that God hath disposed. Thinking within her self, this vessel is not very rich, nor outwardly precious, yet the Superscription saith: Who so chuseth me, shall finde that God hath disposed:

and

and without doubt God never disposeth any harm, therefore by the leave of God this vessel will I chuse.

When the Emperor heard this, he said: O fair Maiden open thy vessel, for it is full of precious stones, and see if thou hast well chosen or no. And when this young Lady had opened it, she found it full of fine gold and precious stones, as the Emperor had told her before. Then said the Emperor: Daughter, because thou hast wisely chosen, thou shalt marry my Son. And then he appointed the wedding day, and they were married with great solemnity: and with much honor continued to their lives end.

The Moral.

This Emperor betokeneth the Father of heaven, who was long time without a natural Son, therefore many men were in danger of perishing in hell. The Empress conceived when the Angel Gabriel said: Lo, thou shalt conceive and bear a Child. And then the firmament began to clear when this little child lightned the world with his birth. The Moon began to wax pale when the face of the Virgin Mary was over-shadowed by vertue of the grace

grace of the holy God, and not only her face was thus shadowed, but also her body, for she was conceived with child as another woman, wherefore Ioseph would have forsaken her privily and gone away. This little Bird that came from the one side of the Mone, betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, who at midnight was born of the Virgin Mary, wrapped in cloathes, and laid in an Ore stall. The two beasts betoken the Ore and the Asse that Ioseph brought with him which honoured him in his Birth. These other beasts that came from farre betoken the Shepheards in the field, to whom the Angel said thus: Loe, I shew you great joy. The birds that sung so sweetly, betoken the Angels of Heaven, which sung at his birth this joyful song: Glory be to God above, and peace to men on earth.

The King of Ampluy, which held war against the Emperor, betokeneth all mankinde, that were contrary to God as long as they were in the devils power. But immediately, when our Lord Jesus Christ was born, he bowed himself to God, and besought him of peace when he received his Baptism, for at our Baptism we promised to draw onely to God, and forsake

the

the Devil and all his pomp. The King gave his daughter in marriage to the Emperors son. Right so every one of us ought to give his soul in marriage to Gods Son, for he is alwayes ready to receive our soul as his Spouse, according to the Scripture, saying thus: I will marry thee to me. But ere our soul may come to the Pallace of Heaven, she must saile by the Sea of the world, in the ship of good life: but oftentimes there riseth a tempest in the sea, that is, trouble of this world, the temptations of the flesh, & the suggestion of the devil ariseth suddenly & drowneth the vertues that the soul received in Baptism, nevertheless yet falleth she not out of the ship of Charity, but keepeth her self surely therein by Faith and Hope. For as the Apostle saith, By Hope we be saved. For it is impossible to be saved without Hope or Faith. The great Whale that followeth the Maiden, betokeneth the Devil, which by night and by day lyeth in wait to overcome the soul by sin: therefore do we as the Mayden did, smite we fire of Charity and Love out of the Stone, that is, Christ, according to this saying, I am a Stone, and certainly the divil shal have no power over us. Many

men

men begin well, as did the Maid, but at the last they be weary of their good works, and so they sleep in sin. And anon when the Devil perceiveth this, he devoureth the sinner in his evil thoughts, delights, consent, and works. Therefore if any of us feel our selves in such wise under the power of the Devil, let him do as the Maiden did, smite the Devil with the knife of bitter repentance, then kindle the fire of Charity, and without doubt he shall cast thee on the land of good life.

The Earl that came with his servants to slay the Whale, betokeneth a discreet Preacher, which dwelleth beside the Sea, that is, beside the world, and not in the world, that is, not drawn to worldly delectation, but ever is ready with good words of holy Scripture, to kill the Devil, and to destroy his power. We must all cry with an high voyce, as the Maiden did, knowledging our sins, and then shall we be delivered from the Devil, and nourished with vertuous exercise.

The Emperor sheweth this Maiden three vessels, that is, God putteth before man, life & death, good and evil, and which of these he chosen he shal obtain. Therefore saith Salomon, Death and life is set

before

before man, choose which him list. And yet man is uncertain whether hee will chuse life or death.

By the first vessell of Gold full of dead mens bones, is understood mighty worldly rich men, who shine like gold outwardly in riches and pomp of the world, nevertheless within they be full of dead mens bones, that is, the works they have done in this world, be dead in the sight of God through deadly sin. Therefore if any man chuse such a life, he shall have that he deserveth, that is, such men be like unto Tombs that be white, and royally painted and arrayed without, and covered with cloth of gold and silk, but within there is nothing but dry bones. By the second vessell of silver, we ought to understand some Justices, and wise men of this world, who shine in faire speech, but within they bee full of wormes and earth, that is, their faire speech, shall availe them no more at the day of iudgement, then the worms of the earth, and peradventure lesse, for then shall they suffer everlasting pain, if they die in deadly sinne. By the third vessell of Lead, full of Gold and precious stones, wee are to understand a simple and poore life, which the chosen Soules choose, that they

may be marryed to our bleſſed Lord Jeſus Chriſt by humility and obedience, and ſuch men bear with them precious ſtones, that is, Faith and her fruitfull works, pleaſing to God: by which at the Judgement day, they bee eſpouſed to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and obtain the heritage of heaven. Unto the which bring us our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt that died on the Croſſe. Amen.

The Argument.

Man by Baptiſm promiſed to live in the fear of God, and forſake the Devill. Chriſt ſorroweth for our ſins, he requireth dutifull ſervice of us at ſix ſeverall ages, but we are alwayes unready for him, yet the mercy of God is ſo favourable towards us, that he ſpareth us even till the laſt age of man, vouchſafeing if then we repent us, and call for grace, believing in his mercies, to receive us into the Throne of his heavenly grace.

The 33. Hiſtory.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor named Calopodus, who took a fair Lady to his wife. They were not long together before

that

that this Empresse conceived and bare him a Sonne, a goodly child, and a fair. When hee was of age, hee was set to Schole, and when hee came to twenty yeares of age, hee desired his Fathers heritage, saying: Dear Father you are an old man, and may not govern your Empire, therefore if it please you to give it me, it shall bee to your ease. Then answered the Emperor, and said: Dear Son, I dread me sore, that when the Empire is in thy power, thou wilt not fulfill my will nor my desire.

Then answered the Empresse (for so much as she loved her sonne better then her husband) and said: My Lord, that cannot be, for thou hast but one Sonne, therefore as I believe, he will fulfill thine intent in all things: this Empire may help him well, and therefore it is best to grant him the Empire. Then answered the Emperor and said, I will first have of him a Letter obligatory, that whensoever hee doth any thing against my will, that then I will depose him from the Empire without any contradiction.

The Son granted this, and did make the Obligation, and sealed it. And when this was done, this young Emperor waxed so proud that he feared neither

ther God nor man, and did very much harme. But his Father suffered it patiently, for hee would bee corrected by no man. Now at last there fell a great dearth in the Empire, so ỳ many men dyed for want of food: this old Emperor was all alone himselfe, and began to have need, wherefore he went to his son for to have some maintenance, which his son granted, and suffered for a time. But within short time his Father began to wax sick, wherefore he called his Sonne and prayed him to give him a draft of his Must. His Son answered and said: that will I not do, for my Must is not good for your complexion. Then said the Emperor: I pray thee Sonne give me a draught of thy wine. His Son answered and said, that he should have none, for my wine is not yet fined, and if I touch it, it will trouble, and therefore I will not broach it till it be clear and fined. Then said his Father, give me some of the third Tun. That I will not do (quoth he) for that wine is not good for a sick man. Then his Father prayed him heartily for a draught of the fourth Tun. Then answered he and said, thereof get ye none, for it is feeble and without any sustentation, and such wine is not good for you,

for

for it is not comfortable. Then said his Father: now good Sonne give me then of the fift Tun: That will I not, quoth he, for that Tun is full of lees and dregs, and such is not fit for men, nor scarcely for hogs. When his Father saw he might get nothing of him, after he was perfectly well, hee went to the King of Jerusalem, and made his complaint of his Son, and shewed him the letter obligatory which his Sonne had made, whereby his father might put him out of his Empire without any gain saying. When the King heard this he called the Emperors Son to answer his Father: And when hee came, hee could not answer to his Father with any reason, wherefore the King put him out of his Empire, and seated his Father therein again: and so he continued all the dayes of his life.

The Morall

This Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ: according to that saying, Is not hee thy Father that hath brought thee up? he hath made thee, &c Deut. 32. verse 6. The Son betokeneth man, to whom he gave all the Empire of this World, according to the Scripture, Heaven he hath given to our

Lord, and earth to man. Mankind made an Obligation with our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, when he received the Sacrament of Baptiſm, wherein he promiſed to ſerve him truly, and forſake the Devill, and all his pomp and vain glory. This Emperor began to wax ſick on a day, that is, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is troubled as oft as a Chriſtian ſinneth and breaketh his Commandements, wherefore he thirſts greatly for the help of our ſoules, and then he aſketh a draught of the firſt Tun, that is, he asketh of man ỹ firſt age of childhood to be ſpent in his ſervice, but incontinently the wicked child anſwereth and ſaith; I may not do ſo, for my Childhood is muſky, that is, it is ſo tender and ſo young that it may not attempt ſo ſoon to ſerve God: which is manifeſtly againſt the truth, for the child of one day is not without ſin. For S. Gregory in his Dialogues ſaith, The children of five years of age drive out ſpirits from the boſomes of their Fathers. Then when God ſeeth that hee cannot have of the Muſt of his childhood, then deſireth he the wine of the ſecond Tun. Then anſwereth the wicked youth, and ſaith, that his Wine is not apt to ſerve God. And when God may not have of the ſecond

Tun,

Tun, then asketh he of the third Tun, that is, of the third Tun of his youth. Then answereth the wicked yong man, and saith, The wine is very strong and mighty, and therefor his youth ought to be spent about manly deeds, in this world, and not in good life, which would make him feeble and weak. When God seeth that he may not have of this Tun, then asketh he of the fourth Tun. And then answereth the wicked man in his manhood, and saith, that aged men are feeble, and may not fast, nor do any hard repentance, and if he did, he should bee the cause of his own death. Then asketh our Lord of the fift Tun, that is, of his old age, when hee stoopeth, and may not goe without a staffe. But the wicked old man excuseth himselfe and saith, That his wine is to feeble to give such a feeble man, for if he should fast one day, it were time on the morrow to make his grave. And when our Lord seeth that he may not have the fifth Tun, then asketh he of the sixth Tun, that is, when a man is blind and may goe to sinne no more, yet desireth hee of such a man drink, that is, help of his soul: But the wretched man lying in despair, saith: Alas, alas, woe to me because I served not Almighty God my Maker and Re-

déemer here in times past, while I was in youth and in prosperity: now there is nothing left but onely the lees and dregs of wretchednesse, therefore what shall it avail mée now to turn toward God? But for such men we should lament.

Nevertheless, God is mercifull, that though he might have no service of man in all his time, yet he is content to have the lees of his Tunne, that is, the good will, though he doth not serve him otherwise, and so shall his good will stand him in stead of godly life. For in what hour the sinner doth repent him of his sin from the bottome of his heart, hee shall be forgiven, as Ezekiel witnesseth. But there bee many ỳ will give no lyme, nor no other thing to him, wherefore Christ shall complain to the King of Ierusalem, that is, to the God-head at the Judgement day, and then as he is God and man, shall he give a sentence definitive against such men: saying, I have hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I have been naked, and ye cloathed me not: I have thirsted, and ye gave me no drink. Loe, thus shall hee reherse to thée the fruits of thy faith. And when this is done, then shall such men bee put to everlasting pain, and the iust man to

to everlasting blisse. Unto which, bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

Man being captivated by Satan, the world refuseth to doe for him, till the God-head of the heavenly Father bearing an earnest affection unto him, did espouse him, and embrace him within the bosome of inward and entire love, adventuring what he might to set all mankind at liberty, yet grudgeth the world that we should alwayes serve our God, and forsake her: but to eschew all such malignity wee are taught in this History.

The 34 History.

IN Rome dwelt sometime a mighty Emperor named Anthony, under whose raigne the Rovers of the Sea had taken prisoner, a mighty mans son of another Region, and brought him to the Emperors prison, being bound. When this young man was thus in prison, he incontinent wrote to his father for his ransome, but hee would neither pay his ransome, nor send him any thing for to comfort him: This when hee heard, he wept sore, and would not be comforted

comforted for ỹ unkindnes of his father.

This Emperor had a fair Daughter, which visited every day the prisoner, and comforted him as much as she might wishing him to bee merry. To whom the prisoner answered and said: How shall I be merry? or how may I toy, thus to ly fast bound in prison from the sight of man? and notwithstanding this it grieveth me most that my Father will not pay my ransome. When the Maiden heard this, shee was moved with pitty, and said: Deare friend, I am sorry for thée, and therefore if thou wilt grant me one thing, I shall deliver thée from thy anguish and pain. What thing is that (quoth he) that thou wilt take me for thy wife. Then said the Prisoner, I promise you surely to fulfill your request and desire, and for the more assurance, I plight you my troth. When he had so done, shortly after the Damosel delivered him out of prison, and fled away with him home to his Fathers house. When his Father saw his son and the Maiden together, he asked the cause why hee brought the Maiden with him? Then said his son: Sir, this Damosel delivered me out of Prison, and therefore she shall be my wife. Then said his Father, I will not consent that

thée

she shall be thy wife, for two reasonable causes which I shall forthwith shew thée. The first is this, it is not unknown to thée that the Emperor her father might have had for thy deliverance great plenty of riches, and for as much as she was untrue to her own Father, and true to thée, it séemeth well that thou shouldest not trust long to her: for being false to her own Father, it is to be feared she will not be true to another man. The second reason is this, the cause why she delivered thée out of prison, was neither for pity nor for love, but for carnall lust that she had to thée. For at thy deliverance she made covenant with thée to be thy wife, and had of thée thy troth, and hath accompanied with thée: therefore son (saith he) it is no reason that she should be thy wife.

The Mayden answered to these objections, and said: as for the first reason that thou layest against me, that I should be untrue to my Father, that is, false: for my Father hath plenty of riches, and thy sonne is but poore, and therefore I help him for pity and for none other cause: and nevertheless thou that art his Father wouldest not pay his ransome, that he might be delivered out of prison. Loe for this cause I have de-

livered

livered him, therefore I am kinder to him then thou that art his own Father, and he is more beholding to mee than to thée. Unto the other reason: whereas thou sayest that I delivered him because of carnall lust: I answer and say plainly that it is not true: For all manner of carnall love is caused of strength and beauty, but thy son is neither strong nor beautiful, for his imprisonment hath taken away his strength and beauty, for by the pain he hath had in prison, he is brought low and made unlusty to sport, and therefore pitty only moved me to deliver him, and not carnall lust.

Then said the son: Dear father, for as much as I was in peril of death, and wrote unto you to pay my ransome that I might bee delivered, and you would not help me, but this gentle Damosell for pitty hath saved me from death, and delivered me out of prison, therefore surely she shall be my wife. So forthwith he married her with great honour, and with her ended his life.

The Morall.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth the Father of heaven. The young man which was taken with the Pyrates of the Sea, betokens all mankind which

was

was taken with the Devill, by the sin of our forefather Adam, and was cast into the prison of Hell, with great sorrow and pain. His Father would not ransome him, that is, the world would doe nothing for him. This faire daughter betokeneth the God-head, which came downe from Heaven, and took manhood of the Virgin Mary, and so made a ghostly marryage betwéen him & man: and upon this condition hee delivered mankind out of the prison of Hel, when he came from Heaven, and forsoke the fellowship of Angels for to dwell with us in this wretched vale of teares. But the Father that betokeneth the World, grudgeth ever against him, and would not suffer that the soul of man should become the spouse of Jesus Christ, but that she should alway serve him, and should forsake our Lord.

Therefore if we follow the world and its vanities, certainly we shall fall into the snare of the Devil. From the which defend us our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

It is the ordinance of God, that no man shall labour for worldly promotion by covetousnesse and falshood, nor by deceit

deceit or other evill courſes, Man for his firſt tranſgreſſion ſhould have been adjudged to perpetual torment in hell, had not the Son of God voluntarily offered himſelfe to the death, to ſave mankind, and deſtroy Sathan his enemy, ſo that thereby he might live with him in the habitation of heaven everlaſtingly.

The 35. Hiſtory.

SOmetime in Rome there dwelt a noble Emperor of great livelihood, named Alexander, which above all vertues loved the vertue of Bounty, wherfore he ordained a Law for great charity, that no man under pain of death ſhould turn a Plaice in his diſh at his meat, but only eat the white ſide, and not the black, and if any man would attempt to do the contrary, he ſhould ſuffer death without any Pardon: but yet ere he dyed, he ſhould aſk three petitions of the Emperor what him liſt (except his life) which ſhould bee granted him.

It befell after upon a day, that there came an Earl and his Son, of a ſtrange Country, to ſpeak with the Emperor. And when the Earl was ſet at meat, he was ſerved with a Plaice, and he which

was

was hungry, and had an appetite to his meat: after he had eaten the white side he turned the black side, and began to eat thereof: wherefore straight way he was accused to the Emperor, because he had offended against the Law. Then said the Emperor: Let him die according to the Law, without any delay. When the Earls son heard ỳ his father should dy, immediately he fell down on both his knées before ỳ Emperor, & said: O my reverend Lord, I most humbly intreat you that I may die for my Father. Then said the Emperor: It pleaseth me well, so that one die for the offence. Then said the Earles son, sith it is so that I must die, I aske the benefit of the Law, that is, that I may have three petitions granted ere I dy. The Emperor answered, and said: Ask what thou wilt, there shall no man say thee nay.

Then said this young Knight: My Lord, you have but one Daughter, the which I desire of your Highnesse, that she may lye one night with me before I die. The Emperor granted for fulfilling of the law, though it were against his will. Neverthelesse this Knight deflowred her not as that night: therefore he greatly pleased the Emperor.

The

The second petition is this: I ask all thy treasure, and immediately the Emperor granted, because hee would not be called a breaker of the Law. And when the Earls sonne had received the Emperors treasure, he imparted it both to poore and to rich, by means whereof he obtained their good wills.

My third petition is this: I aske my Lord, that all their eyes may bee put out incontinent that saw my father eat the black side of the Plaice. Wherefore the Emperor made inquisition immediately, who it was that saw the Earle turn the black side of the Plaice. And they that saw him turn the Plaice bethought them, and said within themselves: If we acknowledge that we saw him do this trespasse, then shall our eys be put out: and therefore it is better that we hold us still. And so there was none found that would accuse him.

When the Earles sonne saw this, he sayd to the Emperor: My Lord (quoth he) ye see there is no man accuseth my father, therefore give mee rightfull iudgement. Then said the Emperor: For as much as no man will acknowledge that they saw him turne the Plaice, therefore I will not that thy father shall dy. Lo thus the son

saved

saved his Fathers life, & after ỳ decease of the Emperor married his daughter.

The Morall.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth the Father of heaven, which ordained a Law, that no man should turn the black side of a Plaice, that is, there should no man labor for riches and promotion by covetousnesse and falshood. The Earl that came to the Emperor betokeneth Adam, our fore-father, who came out of the land of Eden, and turned up the black side of the Plaice, when he eat of the Apple of the forbidden tree, wherefore he should have been condemned to everlasting death: but his Sonne, that betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, he took the flesh of Adam, and proffered himselfe voluntarily to dye for him: and the Father of heaven granted that he should goe down to die for mankind.

Nevertheless, before he died he asked three petitions of his Father of Heaven. The first was this, that he might have by him his Daughter, which betokeneth the soul of man, and bring her with him into the bosome of heaven, according to the words in Osea saying, I will wed her to my selfe.

The second petition was this, all the Emperors treasure, which betokeneth the treasure of heaven, according to this Scripture: Like as the Father hath disposed for me, so I dispose for you.

The third petition is this, that all their eyes should be put out, that is, that the Devil, and all false witnesses which accuse us true men, might be put from the light of heavenly grace.

And thus saved hee mankind, and led him up with him unto the Pallace of Heaven. Unto the which Pallace bring us our Lord Jesus. Amen.

The Argument.

The Father of Heaven of his meere grace, promoteth some poore men, rayfing them from the dust to sit among Princes, but they extolling themselves without regard of Gods goodnes, they are again made abject by him. The Devill worketh deceit in his members against the godly, Christ came down from heaven to minister the water of eternall life unto man, and by his death and passion, to revive our soules, (which before were dead) unto the firme state of eternall

ternall felicity, and to purchase our happinesse with his precious bloud.

The 36. History.

IN Rome there dwelt sometime a mighty Emperor named Leonicius, who on a day rode to a Forrest to disport himselfe, where he met sodainly with a poore man, to whom he said thus: Friend what art thou? and whence commest thou?

My Lord (quoth he) I am come from the next City, and I am your man. Then said the Emperor, thou seemest poore, therefore if thou bee honest and true, I will promote thee to great riches and honour. Then answered the poore man, and said: My Lord, I promise you faithfully to be true to you as long as I live. The Emperor anon made him a Knight, and gave him great fees. When he was thus promoted, he waxed so proud, that he thought himselfe more able to bee an Emperor than Lord: wherefore he made suggestion to divers Lords of that Empire, that hee might usurpe and take upon him through strength of them to be Emperor. When the Emperor heard this, anon he exiled him, and all those that were consenting to him, so that

they lived abiects in great wretchednes and ſorrow: and then the Emperor ordained other men in their ſtead, & gave them all ỳ poſſeſſions of thoſe traitors.

And when the baniſhed men heard that ſtrangers had taken poſſeſſion of their lands and goods, anon they conſpired againſt them, and throughe treaſon requeſted them to a Banquet. And they as innocents thinking upon no ſuch treaſon came at the day aſſigned, and were ſerved with five poyſoned meſſes, whereby as many as taſted of thoſe diſhes died incontinent.

When the Emperor heard this, he was greatly moved, and aſſembled his counſel, to enquire what was beſt to be done for this treaſon, and for their death. Then ſaid the Emperors ſon: My Lord I am your ſon, and you are my Father, and therefore I ſhall give you good counſell and profitable to all men. Not farre hence is a little Nation, wherein dwelleth a fair Maiden, and a gracious in the ſight of every man, which hath an Orchard wherein is a Well, the water whereof is of ſuch vertue, that if it be caſt upon a dead man, ſtraight he ſhall live again and recover his life. Therefore my Lord I ſhall deſcend to that Nation, and ſeeke that water

where

whereby they that were slain at the Banquet, may be restored again to life. And when the Emperor heard this, he greatly reioyced, and said thus: Son thy counsell is good.

And straight-way the Emperors son went into the said Nation, and fell in conceit with the Maiden, in so much that he entred into the Garden, & assailed to taste the water of the Well. And when he had so done, he made fiue deep trenches in the ground, in the which the water ran till it came where the dead men lay buried, hereupon when the water touched them, they arose from death to life. Then the Emperors Son with great ioy led them unto his Father. And when the Emperor saw this, hee was right ioyfull, wherfore he crowned his Son with a Laurell Crown, in token of victory, and so he ended his life in rest and peace.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth the Father of heaven. The poor man that was promoted, betokeneth Lucifer, that was exalted of nought, and enthroned in the Empire of heaven with great ioy and clearnesse, but through his pride he thought he might be like unto

Almighty God. And not only like him, but more than Almighty God: wherefore the Father of Heaven exiled him, and all them that consented to him, to hell: and in his place man was exalted to great ioy and honor. The Devill seeing this, it much grieved him that man should come to such glory and honour, and bade Adam and Eve to a Banquet, when they dide at of the Apple against Gods commandement, and counselled them thus, saying: In what hour ye eat of this Apple, yee shall be like Gods, knowing good and evill. And at this cursed Banquet they were served with five melles that were poysoned, that is their five wits were accorded in eating of the Apple, wherefor man was infected and died. This hearing the Emperors son Christ Jesus, moved with mercy, he came down from heaven into this world, and acquainted him so well with the blessed Virgin Mary, that hee found in her the well of manhood, and conioyned it to the God-head, according to the Scripture: I am the well of life, who drinketh of me shall not thirst. After that, hee suffered to be made five trenches in the ground, that is, five woumds in his body, out of ỹ which ran hoth blood and water, wherevy all man-

kinde

kinde was raised from death to life, and led them up into the Pallace of heaven. Unto the which bring us our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, Amen.

The Argument.

The Father of heaven extendeth his goodnesse divers wayes towards frail men, yet he taketh enntrary wayes, living in spiritual fornication, for the which being exiled from the state of felicity, hee is compelled to lead a miserable and painfull life, But being reconciled by the death of his Saviour, hee repossesseth the heritage of heavenly felicity.

The 34. History.

SOmetime in Rome there reigned a mighty Emperor named Dunstanus in whose Empire there dwelt a gentle knight that had two sons. One of his sons matched himselfe against his Fathers will with a common Harlot. The knight hearing this, exiled his son from him. And when he was thus exiled, he begot on this woman a son: and soon after that he waxed sick, and in penurie, wherefore he sent messengers to his Father, beseeching him of his mercy: this

hearing his Father, he took compassion and ruth on him, wherefore he was reclaimed from banishment. And when he was thus brought again to his Fathers grace, he gave his child which hee had by the common woman to his Father, who kindly received him, and nourished him as his son.

When the other sonne heard this, he said to his Father: Father, quoth he, it seemeth to me that you are out of your right mind, which I will prove by good reason. For he is out of his right mind that receiveth a false heire, and nourisheth him, whose Father hath endamaged and grieved him before. Now my brother which begat this Child, hath done you great injury, when he married the comon woman, against your will & commandement, therefore me thinketh that you are out of your right mind.

Then answered his Father and said: because thy brother is reconciled to me, thou art envious, and thou art unkinde to thy owne brother, willing to put him from thy fellowship for evermore, but soothly no unkind man shall have mine heritage except hee bee reconciled, and yet thou never reconciledst thy selfe to him for thy unkindnesse, for thou mightest have reconciled thy selfe to him, but

thou

thou wouldest not, therefore of my heritage getteſt thou no part.

The Moral.

Dear friends, the Father of theſe two brethren betokeneth the Father of heaven. And his two ſons betoken the nature of Angels, and the nature of Man: For man was married to a common woman or harlot, when he eat the Apple againſt the Commandement of God, wherefore hee was exiled by the Father of heaven, and put from the ioyes of Paradiſe. The ſonne of the common woman betokeneth mankind. This Knights ſonne, that is Adam, lived in great miſery, for after his ſinne he was put from ioy into this wretched valley of teares and weeping, according to the Scripture, In the ſweat of thy browes thou ſhalt eat thy bread. But after by the paſſion of Chriſt he was reconciled. But the other ſonne that betokeneth the Devil, was ever unkind, & grudged daily againſt our reconciling, ſaying, that by reaſon of ſinne wee ought not to come unto the heritage of heaven. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Amen.

The Argument.

We ought in every vocation and calling to behave our ſelves juſtly, and to uſe the poore man with equity: wee muſt not injure rich men. The mighty men are to be honoured, and not defrauded of their dignity and eſtate being men of ſincere life: they that do contrary to the meaning of dutifull behooſe herein, are worthy of everlaſting death.

The 38. Hiſtory.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor named Donatus, which did make three Images: of the which, one held out his hand ſtraight unto the people, and had on his finger a Ring of gold. The ſecond Image had a Beard of gold. And ỹ third had a Mantle of gold. Commanding upon pain of death, that no man ſhould take away from theſe Images the Ring, the Beard, nor the Mantle.

It befell afterward upon a time, that one Dioniſe a Tyrant, came into the Temple, and took away the Ring from the firſt Image, the Beard from the ſecond, and the Mantle from the third. And when hee had thus done, hee was forthwith accuſed unto the Emperor, and

and brought before him, and strictly examined of that trespasse, why hee dispoyled the Images against the Emperors commandement.

Then answered Dionyse, and said as followeth: My reverend Lord, it is lawfull to answer for my selfe: When I entred into the Temple, the first Image held forth his hand straight to me, as who would say I give thee this Ring, and therefore I took the Ring as the gift of the Image, being loath to refuse so gentle an offer. And when I saw the second Image having a Beard, I thought thus with my selfe: I knew sometime the Father of the Image, which had no Beard, & now his Son hath a Beard, which is against reason, the Son to have a beard and the Father none: and therefore I toke from him his beard, that he should be like his Father. After that, when I saw the third having a Mantle of gold, I thought that the Mantle of gold was not behovefull for him in Winter: for gold is naturally cold, which might bee cause of his death, and therefore I took it from him, because it was too cold in Winter, and too hot in Summer.

When Dionyse had excused him by these reasons, the Emperor answered

and

and said: Thou hast answered wickedly for thy selfe. What should cause thée rather than any other man to dispoyle the Images, for as much as I commanded that no man should take any thing away from them, therefore thine owne mouth hath condemned thée. Anon the Emperor called to him one of his Squires, and charged him to smite off his head, and incontinently hee took him, and did unto him as the Emperor had commanded, and so he died a shamefull death.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth Almighty God, the Father of heaven. The thrée Images betokeneth the poore men, the rich men, and the mighty men of this world, the Tyrant Dionise betokeneth all officers in every estate, lewdly behaving themselves, which take away from poore men the Ring off their fingers, and say thus, I may take that is given me: For when the poore man hath ought to do, he must néeds put forth his hand to give whether he will or no, if he would spéed. They take away the Beard from ỹ rich man, and say thus: This man is richer than his Father was, therefore take we his

likelihood from him, and make him like his forefather. They take also the Mantle of gold from the mighty men: when they see any man of honour and good living, willing to correct such open misdoers, then say they this man is too cold, for he inclineth nothing to our opinions, and also he is too hot in power and working against us, therefore go we and take from him the Mantle of might, and so they accuse him and put him out of his office But certainly, all such men stand in peril of everlasting death: From the which save us, he that shed his precious blood for us, Amen.

The Argument.

Man ought to nourish Christ in his heart by faith, and fruits of good life. The reward of such as have care unto the commandements & institutions of God. We must watch lest we fall into temptation: these things considered, we shall then by Gods gracious good providence attain unto the reward of his heavenly and everlasting blisse.

The 39. History.

THere dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperor named Enclius,

Who

who had a faire young Lady to his Wife, upon whom hee had begotten a fair son. When the States of the Empire heard this, they came to the Emperor, and besought him to have the keeping of his son. Immediately the Emperor sent a Herauld throughout the City proclaiming that in whose house were first found fire and water the good man of that house should have his son in keeping, and to nourish. And then the Emperor made a proclaimation, that whosoever had his son to keepe, should nourish him cleanly, and feede him with wholsome meats and drinks. And when the Child come to age, then should the keeper bee promoted to great honour, wherefore many men made ready fire and water in hope to have the Child: But in the night when every man was asleep, there came a Tyrant named Sulapius that quenched the fire, and threw out the water. Nevertheleſſe among all other, there was a man named Ionathas that laboured so diligently, that hee kept both day and night fire and water.

In a morning early the Herauld at the Emperors commandement, went through the City, and sought in every house for fire and water, but hee could finde

finde non till he came to Ionathas house, where he found both fire and water ready, wherfore he was brought before the Emperor, who delivered him his sonne according to the Proclamation.

When Ionathas had the Emperors Sonne he led him home unto his house. And son after he sent for Maions and Carpenters, and did make a strong chamber of lime and stone. And when the chamber was finished, hee sent for Painters to paint on the wall of the chamber ten Images, with this Posey painted above their heads, Who so defileth these Images, shall die a cruell death. And then caused a payre of gallowes to be drawn on the dore, and figured a man hanging thereupon with this Posey painted above his head, So shall he be served that nourisheth the Emperors Son amisse. Also he caused a Chair of gold to be made, and himselfe sitting therein, crowned with a Crown of gold, with this superscription above the head: Who so nourisheth the Emperors Sonne cleanly, thus shall he be honoured.

When this was done, oftentimes as he was asleep, he was greatly tempted to defile these ten excellent Images, but anon he read the superscriptions above

their

their heads, and then all the temptation ceased. And when the Emperors son was evilly kept, then went he to the gallowes and read that Posey which was written above his own head, and for dread thereof kept the child better, and was diligent to give attendance on him.

And when hee beheld the chair, and himselfe sitting therein crowned with a crown of gold, hee was right joyfull, thinking to have good reward for keeping of the Emperors son. When the Emperor heard of this diligent demeanour about his son, he sent for him, and thanking him for his well keeping and nourishing of him, he after promoted him to great honour and dignity.

The Morall.

This Emperor betokeneth the Father of Heaven. The Empresse betokeneth the blessed Virgin Mary. The Emperors Son betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ. The Herauld that was sent throughout the City betokeneth Saint John Baptist, who was sent before our Lord to prepare the way to him, according to the holy Scripture: Loe I send mine Angell before me, &c. The States that desired the Emperors

rows son to nourish, betokens, the Patriarkes and Prophets, which desire greatly to nourish our Lord Jesus Christ, and also to see him, but they might not see him, nor nourish him, for fire and water which should have been cause of their sight, was not with them perfectly.

The fire betokeneth the Holy Ghost which had not yet appeared to them, for they were not washed with the water of Baptism. Also ye may understand by the fire perfect Charity, and by the water true Contrition, which do now adayes faile in many men, and therefore they may not have the little Child Jesus in their hearts.

Ionathas that watched so diligently, betokeneth every good Christian man, which studieth ever to watch in well doing, yelding to God for sinnes the fire of charitable repentance, and the water of contrition. But oftentimes the Tyrant, which betokeneth the Devill, putteth out the fire of Charity from out of mens hearts, and casteth out the water of Contrition, so that they may not nourish the little Child Jesus. Therefore let us watch as Ionathas did, that we enter not into temptation. And call we unto us Masons, that is discreet

Preachers which can make in our hearts a Chamber of stone, that is, a sure Faith and Hope: Then call wee to us Painters, that is, Ministers of Gods word which can paint in our hearts ten Images, that is, the Ten Commandements, which if thou kéep and observe daily, without doubt thou shalt be honoured in heaven.

And if thou kéep well the Emperors Son, thou shalt sit in a Chaire of Gold, crowned with a crown of Gold. And if that thou nourish him not well, without doubt thou shalt be in danger of torment in Hell. From the which preserve us our blessed Saviour Jesus.

The Argument.

The Soul of man espoused unto Christ the flesh procureth the same to sin. The Christian soule by faith withstandeth temptation. The Redemption of mankind from sin and death. The deceits of unthankfull hearts. The spirits health, the defects of the flesh. After a pure repentance followeth perpetuall joy and felicity both of soul and body.

The 40. History.

IN Rome dwelt sometime a mighty Emperor named Menelay, which had wedded

wedded the kings daughter of Hungary, a fair Lady and a gracious in all her works, and specially she was mercifull. On a time as the Emperor lay in his bed, he bethought him that he would go visit the Holy Land. And on the morrow he called to him the Empresse his wife, and his own only mother, and thus he said: Dear Lady, I may not, nor will not hide from you the privities of my heart: I purpose to visit the holy Land, wherefore I ordaine thee principally to be Lady and Governesse over all my Empire, and all my people: And under thee I ordain here my brother to be thy Steward, for to provide all things that may be profitable to my Empire and to my people.

Then said the Empresse: Sith it will no otherwise bee, but that needs thou wilt goe to visit the City of Ierusalem, I shal be in your absence as true as any turtle that hath lost her Mate, for as I beleeve, ye shall not escape thence with your life.

The Emperor anon comforted her with fair words, and kissed her, & after that took his leave of her and of all other and went toward the City of Ierusalem.

And anon after the Emperor was gone, his brother became so proud, that

he oppressed poore men, and robbed rich men: and he did worse then this, for daily hee stirred the Empresse to commit sin with him. But ever she answered again as an holy and devout woman, and said: I will (quoth she) never consent to you nor to any other as long as my Lord liveth. Nevertheless this Knight would not leave with his answer, but ever when he found her alone he made his complaint to her and stirred her by all the wayes that he could to sin with him.

When this Lady saw that he would not cease for any answer, nor would not amend himselfe: when she saw her time, she called to her three or four of the worthiest men of the Empire, and said to them thus: It is not unknown to you that my Lord the Emperor ordained me principall Governor of this Empire, and also he ordained his brother to be Steward under me, and that he should do nothing without my counsell, but he doth all the contrary: for he oppresseth greatly poore men, and likewise robbeth the rich men, and yet hee would doe more then this, if he might have his intent, wherefore I command you in my Lords name, that you binde him fast and cast him into prison.

Then

Then said they, sothly he hath done many evil deeds since our Lord the Emperor went, therefore we be ready to obey your commandements, but in this matter you must answer for us to our Lord the Emperor. Then said she: dread ye not, if my Lord knew what he had done as well as I, he would put him to the foulest death that could be thought: immediately these men laid hands on him and bound him fast with Iron chains, and put him in prison, whereas he lay long time after, till at the last it fortuned there came tidings that the Emperor was coming home, and had obtained great renown and victory. When his brother heard of his comming, he said: Would to God my brother might not find me in prison: for if he do, he will enquire the cause of my imprisonment of the Empresse, and she will tell him all the truth, how I moved her to commit sinne, and so for her I shall have no favour of my brother, but lose my life: this know I well, therefore it shall not be so. Then sent he a messenger unto the Empresse, praying her that she would vouchsafe to come to the Prison doore, that he might speak a word or two with her.

The Empresse came to him & enqui-

red of him what he would have. He answered and said; O Lady have mercy upon me, for if the Emperor my brother find me in prison, then shall I die without any remedy.

Then said the Empresse: If I might know that thou wouldest be a good man and leave thy folly, thou shouldest finde grace. Then did he promise her assuredly to be true, and to amend all his trespasse. When he had thus promised the Empresse delivered him anon, and made him to be bathed and shaven, and apparelled him worthily according to his estate: and then she said unto him thus. Now good brother take thy Steed and come with me, that we may meet my Lord. He answered and said: Lady I am ready to fulfill your will and Commandement in all things. And then the Empresse took him with her, and many other Knights, and so rode forth to meet with the Emperor: and as they rode together by the way they saw a great Hart runne before them, wherefore every man with such hounds as they had, chased him on horseback, so that with the Empresse was left no creature save only the Emperors Brother, who seeing that no man was there but they two, thus he said

unto

unto the Empresse: Loe, Lady, here is beside a privie forrest, and long it is ago that I spake to thée of love, come now and consent unto me that I may lie with thée.

Then said the Empresse: Ah sole, what may this be? Yesterday I delivered thée out of prison upon thy promise, in hope of amendment, and now thou art returned to thy folly again, wherefore I say now to thée as I have said before, there shall no man do such thing with me, save only my Lord the Emperor, which ought of very duty for to do. Then said he, if thou wilt not consent to me, I shall hang thee here upon a tree in this forrest, where no man shall finde thee, and so shalt thou die an evil death. The Empresse answered mickly, and said: Though thou smite off my head, or put me to death with all manner of torment, thou shalt never have my consent to such a sin.

When he heard this, he unclothed her all save her smock, and hanged her up by ỹ hair upon a tree, & tyed her Steed before her, and so rode to his fellowes, and told them that a great hoast of men met him, and took the Empresse away from him, and when he had told them

this, they made all great sorrow.

It befell on the third day after, there came an Earle to hunt in that Forrest, and as he rode beating the bushes he unkennels a For, whom his Hounds followed fast till they came nere the tree where the Empresse hanged. And when the dogs smelt the savour of her, they left the For and ranne toward the tree as fast they could.

The Earl seeing this, wondred greatly and spurring his Horse, followed them till he came where the Empresse hanged. When the Earle saw her thus hanging, he marvelled greatly, for as much as she was right fair and beautifull to behold, wherefore he said unto her in this manner wise: O woman, who art thou? and of what country? and wherefore hangest thou here in this manner?

The Empresse that was not yet fully dead, but at point ready to die, answered and said: I am, quoth she, a strange woman, and am come out of a farre countrey, but how I came hither God knoweth. Then answered the Earle and said: Whose Horse is this that standeth by thee bound, to this tree? Then answered the Lady and said that it was hers. When the Earle

heard

heard this, he saw well that she was a Gentle woman and come of noble linage wherefore hee was the rather moved with pitty, and said unto her: O faire Lady, thou semest of gentle bloud, and therefore I purpose to deliver thee from this mischiefe, if thou wilt promise to go with me and nourish my fair young daughter, and teach her at home in my Castle, for I have no child but only her, and if thou kep her well, thou shalt have a good reward for thy labour. Then said she: as far forth as I can or may I shall fulfill your intent. And when she had thus promised him, he took her down off the tree, and led her home to his Castle, and gave her the keeping of his Daughter that he loved so much and she was cherished so well, that she lay every night in the Earls chamber, and his Daughter with her: and in the chamber every night there burned a lamp, which hanged between the Empresses bed and the Earles bed. This Lady behaved her selfe so gently, that she was beloved of every creature. There was at that time in the Earles house a Steward which much loved this Empresse, and often spake to her of his love. But she answerd him again & said, Know ye, dear friend for a certainty,

that

that I will never love any man in such manner wise, but only him whom I am greatly bounden to love by Gods Commandement.

Then said the Steward: thou wilt not consent unto me. Sir, quoth shée, what néed you any more to aske such things? The vow that I have made, I will truly kéep and hold by the grace of God.

And when the Steward heard this, he went his way in great wrath and anger, thinking within himselfe, if I may I shall be revenged on thée.

It befell upon a night within short time after, that the Earles chamberdore was forgotten and left unshut, which the Steward had anon perceived: And when they were all a slæp, he went and spyed by the light of the Lamp, where the Empresse & the young mayden lay together, and with that he drew out his knife, and cut the throat of the Earles daughter, and put the bloody knife into the Empresses hand, she being aslæp. and nothing knowing thereof, to the intent that when the Earle awaked he should sée the knife in her hand, & that hee should think that shee had cut his Daughters throat, and so she would be

put

put to a shamefull death for his mischievous deed. And when the Damsel was thus slain, and the bloudy knife in the Empresse hand, the Countesse awaked out of her sleep, & saw by the light of the Lamp the bloudy knife in the Empresse hand, wherefore she was almost out of her wits, and said to the Earle: O my Lord, behold in yonder Ladies hand a wonderfull thing.

Then the Earle awaked and loked toward the Empresses bed, and saw the bloudy knife, as the Countesse had said: wherefore he was greatly moved and cryed to her and said: Awake woman out of thy sleep, what thing is this that I see in thy hand? Then the Empresse through his cry awaked out of her sleep, and in her waking the knife fell out of her hand, and with that shee loked by her, and found the Earles Daughter dead by her side, and all the bed besprinkled with bloud, wherefore with an high voyce she cryed, and said: alas, alas, and woe is me, my Lords daughter is slain.

Then cryed the Countesse unto the Earle with a pitious voyce, and said: O my Lord let this devillish woman be put to the foulest death that can be thought,

which

which thus hath slain our only child. Then when the Countesse had said thus to the Earle, he said to the Empresse in this wise. The high God knoweth that thou mischievous woman hast slain my Daughter with thine own hands, for I saw the bloudy knife in thy hand, and therefore thou shalt die a foul death. Then said the Earle in this wise: O thou woman were it not I dread God greatly, I should cleave thy body with my sword in two parts, for I delivered thee from hanging, and now thou hast slain my Daughter, nevertheless for me thou shalt have no harme, therefore go thy way out of this City without any delay, for if I find thee here after this day, thou shalt die a most cruell death.

Then arose this woful Empresse and did on her cloathes, and after leapt on her Palfray and rode toward the East alone without any safe conduct. And as she rode thus mourning by the way, she espied on the left side of the way, a paire of Gallowes, and seven officers leading a man to the Gallowes to be hanged, wherefore she was moved with great pitty, and smote her horse with her stick, & rode to them praying them that shee might re-

deeme

deem that misdoer if he might be saved from death by any meanes.

Then said they, Lady, it pleaseth us well that you redeem him. Anon the Empresse accorded with them, and payed his ransome, and he was delivered.

Then said shee to him: Now my good friend, bee true unto me till thou die, sith I have delivered thee from death.

On my soul (quoth he) I promise you ever to be true. And when he had thus said, he followed the Lady still, till they came nigh a City, and then said the Empresse to him: Good friend, quoth she, goe forth thy way afore mee into the City and see thou take up for us an honest lodging, for there I purpose to rest awhile. Her man went forth as she commanded, and took up for her a good lodging & an honest, where she abode a long time. When the men of the City perceived her beauty, they wondred greatly, inherfore many of them craved of her unlawfull love. but all was in vaine, for they might not speed in any wise. It fortuned after upon a day ỹ there came a ship-full of merchandise, and arrived in the Haven of that City. When ỹ Lady heard this, she said unto her servant: Go to the ship & see if there

bee

be my Cloath for my use. Her servant went forth to the Ship, whereas he found many very fine cloathes: wherefore he prayed the master of the ship that he would come into the City and speak with his Lady. The Master granted him, and so the servant came home to his Lady before and warned her of the comming of the Master of the Ship. Soon after the Master of the ship came and saluted the Lady courteously: and the Lady received him according to his degree, praying him ꝑ she might have for her mony such Cloath as might be profitable for her wearing. Then hee granted that she should have any that liked her, and sone they were agreed, wherefore the servant went immediately again with the Master of the ship for the Cloath. And when they were both within on shipbord, the Master said to the Ladies Servant: My dear friend, to thée I would open my counsel if I might trust to thée, and if thou help me, thou shalt have of me a great reward.

Then answered he and said: I shall (quoth he) be sworn to thee to kéep thy counsel, and fulfill thy intent as farre forth as I can.

Then said the Master of the ship, I love

love thy Lady more then I can tell thée, for her beauty and feature is so excellent that I would give for the love of her all the gold that I have: and if I may obtain the love of her through thy help, I will give thée whatsoever thou wilt desire of me.

Then said the Ladyes servant: tell mee by what means I may best help thée. Then said the Master of the Ship goe home to thy Lady again, and tell her that I will not deliver to thée the Cloath except she come her selfe: and doe thou but bring her to my ship, and if the wind bée good and fit, then I purpose to lead her away. Thy counsel is good, quoth the Ladyes servant, therefore give me some reward, and I shall fulfill thy desire.

Now when he had received his reward, he went again to the Lady, and told her, that by no means the Master of the Ship would deliver him ỳ Cloath except she came her selfe. The Lady beléeved her servant, and went to the ship. Now when she was within the ship-board, her servant abode without.

When the Master saw that she was within the ship, and the wind was good he drew up the sayle and sayled forth.

When the Lady perceived this, thus

the

ſhe ſaid to the Maſter: O Maſter (quoth ſhe) what reaſon is this that thou haſt done to me? The Maſter anſwered, and ſaid: Madam, certainly it is ſo, that I muſt needs lye with thee, and afterward eſpouſe thee. O good Sir, quoth ſhe, I have made a vow that I will never doe ſuch thing but with him unto whom I am bound by right, and by the Law. Softly, quoth he, if ye will not grant mee with your good will, I will caſt you out into the midſt of the ſea, and there ſhall ye dye an evil death: If it be ſo, quoth ſhee, that I muſt needs conſent, or elſe dye, firſt I pray thee to prepare a private place in the end of the ſhip, whereas I may fulfill ſome intent ere I dye; and alſo I pray thee that I may ſay my prayers unto the Father of Heaven that hee may have mercy on mee.

The Maſter beleeved her, wherefore hee did ordaine her a Cabbin in the end of the ſhip. Wherein ſhee kneeled downe on both her knees and made her prayers, ſaying on this wiſe: O thou my Lord God, thou haſt kept me from my youth in cleanneſſe, keep me now that I bee not deflowred, ſo that I may ſerve thee ever with a clean heart and mind, and let not this

wicked

wicked man prevaile with me, nor any other the like wickednesse come nigh me. When she had ended her prayers there arose suddenly a great tempest in the Sea, so that the Ship all to brast and all that were therein perished save the Lady, and she caught a Table and saved her selfe, and the Master caught a bord of the Ship, and saved himselfe likewise: nevertheless she knew not of him, nor he of her, for they were driven to divers coasts. This Lady landed in her owne Empire, neare to a rich City wherein she was honourably received and she lived so holy a life, that God gave her grace and power to heale sick folk of all manner of diseases, wherefore there came much people to her, both crooked blind and lame, and every man through the grace of God and her good endeavour was healed: wherefore her name was known through divers Regions. Nevertheless shee was not known as the Empresse. At the same time the Emperors brother (that had hanged her before by the haire) was smitten with a foule Leprosie. The knight that slew the Earles daughter, and put the bloody knife in her hand was blinde, deafe, and had the Palsie. The Theefe that betrayed her to the Master

of the ship was lame and full of the cramp. And the Master of the ship distraught out of his wits.

When the Emperor heard that so holy a woman was in that City, he called his brother, and said to him thus: Goe we, dear brother, unto this holy woman that is dwelling in this City, that shée may heal thée of thy Leprosie. Would to God, O noble brother (quoth he) that I were healed. Anon the Emperor with his brother went towards the City. Then when the Citizens heard of his comming, they received him honourably with procession, and all provision fitting his estate. And then the Emperor enquired of the Citizens, if any such holy woman were among them that could heal sick folk of their disease. The Citizens answered and said, that such an one there was. Now at the same time was come to the same City the Knight which slew the Earles daughter, and the Theef which she saved from the gallowes, and the Master of the Ship, to be healed of their diseases.

Then was the Empresse called forth, before the Emperor, but she muffled her face as well as she could, that the Emperor her Husb and should not know her

and

and when she had so done, she saluted him with great reverence, as appertained to his state, and he again in like manner, saying thus: O good Lady if thou list of thy kindnesse to heal my brother of his Leprosie, ask of me what you will, and I shall grant it thee for thy reward.

When the Empresse heard this, shee looked about her, and saw there the Emperors brother a foule Leper: she saw there also the Knight that slew the Earles daughter blind and deafe, the Theef that shee saved from the Gallowes lame, and also the Master of the Ship distraught out of his wits, and all were come to her to be healed of their maladies, and knew her not, but though they knew her not, shee knew them well. Then said she unto the Emperor thus: My reverend Lord, though you would give me all your Empire I cannot heal your brother, nor none of these other, except they acknowledge openly what great evill they have done.

When the Emperor heard this, hee turned him towards his brother, & said unto him: Brother, acknowledge openly thy sin before all these men, that thou mayst be healed of thy sicknesse. Then anon he began to tel how he had led his

life, but he told not how he had hanged the Empresse in the Forrest by the hair of the head, most dispightfully.

When he had acknowledged all that him list, the Empresse replied, and said: Sothly my Lord, I would gladly lay unto him my medicine, but I wot right well it is in vain, for he hath not made a full confession.

The Emperor hearing this, he turned toward his brother, and said in this wise: what evil, sorrow or other unhappy wretchednesse is in thée, seest thou not how that thou art a foule Leper: therefore knowledge thy sin truly, that thou mayest be whole, or else avoyd my company for evermore.

Ah my Lord, quoth he, I may not tell my life openly, except I bee first sure of thy grace. What hast thou trespassed against me, quoth the Emperor: Then answered his brother, and said. Mine offence against thée is grievous, and therefore I ask thée heartily forgivenesse. The Emperor thought not on the Empresse, for as much as he supposed she had béen dead many years before, therefore he commanded his brother to tell forth wherein he had offended him, and he should be forgiven.

When the Emperor had thus forgiven his

his brother, he began to tell openly how he had desired the Empresse to commit adultery with her, and because she denied, hee had hanged her by the hair in the Forrest on such a day.

When the Emperor heard this, hee was almost beside himselfe, and in his rage he said thus: O thou wretched creature, ỳ vengeance of God is fallen upon thée, and were it not that I have pardoned thée, thou shouldest die the most shamefull death that could bee thought.

Then said the Knight that slew the Earles Daughter: I wot not, quoth he what Lady you meane, but I wot that my Lord found on a time such a Lady hanging by the hair in the Forrest, and brought her home to his Castle, and he took her his daughter to kéep, and I provoked her as much as I could to sin with me, but she would in no wise consent to me, wherefore I slew the Earls Daughter that lay with her, and when I had so done, I put the bloudy knife in the Ladyes hand, that the Earle should think she had slain his daughter with her own hand, & then was she exiled thence, but where she became I wot not.

Then said the Theefe: I wot not of

what Lady ye mean, but well I wot that seuen Officers were leading me to the Gallowes, and such a Lady came riding by and bought me of them, and then went I with her, and afterward I betrayed her unto the Master of the ship.

Such a Lady (quoth the Master of the Ship) receiued I, and when we were in the middest of the Sea, I would haue lain with her, but she kneeled down to her prayers, and anon there arose such a tempest, that the ship all to brast and all therein were drowned saue she and I, but afterward what befell of her I wot not.

Then cryed the Empresse with a loud voyce, and said, Sowkly dear friends, ye do now truly confess and declare the truth, wherefore I will now apply my medicine, and anon they receiued their healths.

When this Lady the Empresse had thus done, she uncouered her face to the Emperor, and he forthwith knew her, and ran to her and embraced her in his armes, and kissed her oftentimes, and for ioy he wept bitterly, saying: Blessed be God, now I haue found that I desired. And when he had thus said, he led her home to the Pallace with great ioy,

and

and after when it pleased Almighty God, they ended both their lives in peace and rest.

The Morall.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ. This Empresse betokeneth a holy Soul: this Emperors brother betokeneth the flesh, to whom our Lord hath given charge of the Empire, but most principally to the Soul. Nevertheless, the wretched flesh oft provoketh the Soul to sinne, but the Soul that loveth God above all things withstandeth that temptation, calleth to her, her ghostly power, that is, Reason, Will, Understanding, and Conscience, and maketh them to imprison the flesh that is disobedient to the Soul, in the prison of true repentance, unto the time it obey reason in all things.

And thus in hope of mercy he sinneth again: to whom the holy Writer saith Cursed be the man that sinneth in hope: And at the last the Soul enclineth to the flesh, and letteth him out of the prison of repentance, and washeth him from the filth of sinne, and arrayeth him with good vertues, and maketh him leap on

the Palfray of charitable humility, & so rideth forth to meete our Lord with the sacrifice of thanks-giving. But alas, oft the sinner trespasseth against holy Scripture, wherfore the heart, that is, the lust of the flesh ariseth before him, and after runneth great Hounds, that is, evill thoughts, and so long they chase, till the body and the soule be left alone, and then the flesh stirreth that pure soule, being the spouse to Almighty God: but the pure and undefiled Soule that is so well beloved with God, will not forsake our Lord, and consent to sin wherefore the wretched flesh full oft dispoyleth her of all her clothing, that is, of all her vertues, and hangeth her up by the hair on an Oake, that is, on lusts and delights, and there shee hangeth till the good Earle commeth, that is, a discreet Preacher in the Forest of this world to preach and teach the word of God: then he taketh her down and leadeth her forth to the Church, to nourish his Daughter, that is, to nourish conscience with fruitful Faith. The Earl had in his Chamber a Lamp: right so every discreet Preacher should have before him the Lamp of holy Scripture, whereby hee may see both the grievance and profit of the Soul

in

in learning of vertues, and putting away of vice. The Steward that stirreth her to sin, is nought else but pride of life, which is Steward of this world by whom many men be deceived. But when the Soul that is so well beloved with Christ, will not consent unto the sinne of pride, then taketh this evill Steward the knife of Covetise, wherewith he slayeth the Earls daughter, that is, Conscience, according to Scripture saying: Gold and silver hath blinded the eyes of Iudges, and hath overthrown wise men, so that equity and righteousnesse might not enter, but stood a farre, and turned their backs. This Lady also redeemed a man from death, that is, from everlasting death, which he had deserved by deadly sinne: Therefore doe we as did this Lady, smite we our horse, that is, our flesh, with the spurres of repentance and so ride we forth in all haste to save our neighbour from the sink of deadly sinne to help him both bodily and ghostly, as Solomon saith.

Woe be to that man lying in deadly sinne, that hath no man to lift him out thereof. Therefore awake thy neighbour and help him. For a brother that is holpen

pen of another, is like a sure City, and if he give but a cup of cold water in the way of help, he shall not lose his reward.

But many now a dayes be very unkind, as was the Theefe which deceived the Lady, after that she had saved him from hanging. The Master of the ship betokeneth the World, by whom many men be deceived. But nevertheless, as oft as a Man taketh on him voluntarily the charge of Charity, and obeyeth unto the Commandements of God, and forsaketh the world, then breaketh he the Ship. For it is impossible to please God and man, and the world, all at one time.

When this Lady had escaped the tempest of the Sea, she went to a City, that is, the Soul after the troubles of this world, went to the holy life, and there she healed all manner of sick folk, that is, every man that is troubled in his soul, that is, infected with divers sicknesses, those this Lady healed through holy life But they could not be healed till they had first confessed their sinnes unto the Empresse the Church of God, and then she healeth them by repentance & amendment of life: yet all this while was the Empresse unknown to her husband, &

is, the Church wandreth in the wildernesse of this wicked world, untill God by miraculous means made her known unto him, and so led her home by victory & triumph in the truth unto ỹ heavenly habitation of eternall rest & glory: Unto the which, Almighty God bring us all for his Sons sake. Amen.

The Argument.

Every supream Magistrate and other inferior, is to be honoured and reverenced. Every true Christian man ought to consider his duty herein, and every false Christian perverting the wayes of the Godly: the reward of such is layd up in Hell, but the just shall inherit the blessed life everlasting.

The 41 History.

IN Rome sometime dwelt a mighty Emperour named Martin, which for entire affection kept with him, his brothers Son whom men called Fulgentius With this Martin dwelt also a Knight that was Steward of the Empire, and Uncle unto the Emperor, which envied this Fulgentius, studying day and night how he might bring the Emperor and this

his youth at debate. Wherefore the Steward on a day went to the Emperor, and said My Lord, quoth he, I that am your true servant, am bound in duty to warne your highnesse, if I heare any thing that toucheth your honour, wherefore I have such things that I must néeds utter it in secret to your Maiesty betweene us two: Then said the Emperour, good Friend, say on what thée list.

My most dear Lord (quoth the Steward) Fulgentius your Cosin, and your neigh kinsman hath defamed you wonderfully and shamefully throughout all your Empire, saying, that your breath stinketh, and that it is death to him to serve you your Cup. Then the Emperor was grievously displeased, and almost beside himselfe for anger, and said unto him thus: I pray thée good friend tell me the very truth, if that my breath stinketh as he saith. My Lord (quoth the Steward) yée may beléeve me, I never perceived a sweéter breath in my dayes than yours is. Then said the Emperor, I pray thée good friend tell me how I may bring this thing to good proofe.

The Steward answered, & said: My Lord (quoth he) yée shall right well understand

derstand the truth, for to morrow next when he serveth you of your Cup, yee shall see that hee will turne away his face from you, because of your breath, and this is the most certain proofe that may be had of this thing. Verily, quoth the Emperor, a truer proofe cannot be had of this thing. Therefore anon when ỳ Steward heard this, he went straight to Fulgentius, and took him aside, saying thus: Dear Friend, thou art neer kinsman, and also Nephew unto my Lord the Emperor, therefore if thou will be thankfull unto me, I will tell thée of a fault whereof my Lord the Emperor complaineth oft, and thinketh to put thée from him (except it bee the sooner amended) and that will be a great reproofe to thée. Then said this Fulgentius, Ah good sir, for his love that died upon the Crosse, tell me why my Lord is so sore moved with me, for I am ready to amend my fault in all that I can or may, and for to be ruled by your discreet counsell,

Thy breath (quoth the Steward) stinketh so sore, ỳ his drink doth him no good, so grievous unto him is the stinking breath of thy mouth. Then said Fulgentius unto the Steward: Truly, that

perceived

perceiued I neuer till now, but what think you of my breath, I pray you to tell me the very truth: Truly (quoth the Steward) it stinketh greatly and foule: And this Fulgentius beléeued all that he said, and was right sorrowfull in his minde, and prayed the Steward of his counsell, and help in this wofull case. Then said the Steward vnto him, if that thou wilt do my counsel, I shall bring this matter to a good conclusion, therefore do as I shall tell thée.

I counsell thée for the best, and also warn thée, that when thou seruest my Lord the Emperor of his Cup, that thou turne thy face away from him, so that he may not féele thy stinking breath vntill the time that thou hast prouided thée of some remedy therefore.

Then was Fulgentius right glad, and sware to him that he would doe by his Counsel.

Not long after, it befel that this yong man Fulgentius serued his Lord as he was wont to doe, and therewith suddenly he turned his face from his Lord the Emperour as the Steward had taught him.

And when the Emperor perceiued

the

the avoyding of his head, he smote this young Fulgentius on the brest with his foot, and sayd to him thus: O thou lewd Varlet, now I see well it is true that I have heard of thee, and therefore goe thou anon out of my sight, that I may see thee no more in this place. And with that this young Fulgentius wept full sore, and avoyded the place, and went out of his sight.

And when this was done, the Emperor called unto him his Steward, and said: how may I rid this Varlet from the World, that thus hath defamed me? My most dear Lord, quoth the Steward, right well you shall have your intent.

For here beside, within these three miles ye have Brick-makers, which daily make great fire for to burn Brick, and also they make Lime, therefore my Lord send to them this night, charge them upon pain of death, that whosoever commeth to them first in the Morning, saying to them thus: My Lord commandeth you to fulfil his will: that they take him and cast him into the Furnace, and burne him: and this night command you this Fulgentius, that he goe early in the morning to your workmen, and that he aske

them

them whether they have fulfilled your will which they were commanded, or not, and then shall they according to your commandement, cast him into the fire, and thus shall he die an evill death.

Surely, quoth the Emperor, thy counsell is good therefore call to me that Varlet Fulgentius. And when the young man was come to the Emperors presence, he said to him thus: I charge thee upon pain of death, that thou rise early in the morning, and go to the burners of Lime and Brick, and that thou be with them early before the Sun rise, three miles from this house, and charge them in my behalfe that they fulfil my commandement, or else they shall die a most shamefull death.

Then spake this Fulgentius: My Lord, if God send me my life, I shall fulfil your will, were it that I shall go to the Worlds end.

When Fulgentius had this charge, he could not sleep for thought, that he must arise early for to fulfil his Lords commandement. The Emperor about midnight sent a messenger on horse-back unto his Brick-makers, commanding them upon pain of death, that whosoever came to them first in ỹ morning, saying

unto

unto them, (as before is rehersed) they should take him, and bind him, and cast him into the fire, and burn him to the bare bones.

The Brick-makers answered, and said, it should be done. Then the messenger returned home again, and told the Emperor that his commandement should be diligently fulfilled.

Early in the morning following, Fulgentius arose & prepared him towards his way, and as hee went hee heard a Bell ring to Service, wherefore hee went to heare Service, and after the end of Service he fell asleep, and there hee slept a long while, so soundly that the Priest nor none other might awake him.

The Steward desiring inwardly to heare of his death, about two of the clock he went unto the work men, and said unto them thus: Sirs (quoth he) have ye done the Emperors commandement or no?

The Brick makers answered him and said: No truly, we have not yet done his commandement, but it shall be done, and with that they layd hands on him. Then cryed the Steward, & said: And sirs save my life, for the Emperor commanded that Fulgentius should bee

put to death. Then said they, the Messenger told us not so but bee bad us that whosoever came first to us in the morning, saying as you have said, that we should take him and cast him into the Furnace, and burn him to ashes: & with that they threw him into the fire.

And when he was burnt, Fulgentius came to them, and said: Good Sirs, have you done my Lords commandement, yea, surely said they, and therefore go ye again to the Emperor, and tell him so. Then said Fulgentius, for Christs love tell mee that commandement.

We had in commandement, said they upon pain of death, that whosoever came to us first in the morning, and said like as thou hast said, that wee should take him and cast him into the furnace: But before thee, came the Steward, and therefore have we fulfilled on him the Emperors commandement now hee is burnt to the bare bones.

When Fulgentius heard this, hee thanked God that he had so preserved him from death therefore he took his leave of the workmen and went again to the Pallace.

When the Emperor saw him he was almost distract of his wits for anger, and thus he said: Hast thou been with

the

the Brickmakers and fulfilled my commandement: Sothly my gracious Lord I have bene there, but ere I came there, your commandement was fulfilled. How may that be true quoth the Emperor?

Forsooth said Fulgentius, the Steward came to them afore me, and said that I should have said, so they took him and threw him into the Furnace, and if I had come any rather, so would they have done to me, and therefore I thank God that hath preserved me from death.

Then said the Emperor tell me the truth of such questions as I shall demand of thee. Then said Fulgentius to the Emperor: You never found in me any false-hod, and therefore I greatly wonder why ye have ordained such a death for me: for well ye know that I am your own Brothers sonne. Then said the Emperor to Fulgentius: It is no wonder, for that death I ordained for thee through counsell of the Steward, because thou didst defame me throughout all my Empire, saying, that my breath did stink so grievously, that it was death to thee, and in token thereof, thou turnedst away thy face when thou servedst me of my Cup, and that I saw with mine eyes: and for this cause I or-

damned for thée such a death, and yet thou shalt dy, except I hear a better excuse.

Then answered Fulgentius, and said, Ah dear Lord, if it might please your Highnesse for to hear me, I shall shew you a subtill and deceitfull imagination. Say on, quoth the Emperor.

The Steward (quoth Fulgentius) that is now dead, came to me and said, that ye told unto him that my breath did stink, and there upon he counselled me, that when I served you of your Cup, I should turne away my face: I take God to witnesse I ly not.

When the Emperor heard this, hee believed him, and said: O my Nephew, now I sée through the right wise iudgement of God, the Steward is burnt, and his own wickednesse and envie is fallen on himselfe, for he ordained this malice against thée, and therefore thou art much bound to Almighty God that hath preserved thée from death.

The Morall.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth every supream Magistrate. And Fulgentius his nephew betokeneth every true Christian man, which should truly serve them with faithfull loyalty, like as Fulgentius served the Emperor

at

at his Cup, wherefore he shall be greatly loved of God. This Steward betokeneth every false Christian man, as Kain, which oftentimes turneth the heart of right wise men from God, saying, that his breath stinketh, that is, that the life of this Magistrate is not acceptable to God or men, which is against the Scripture, which saith Judge not, and ye shall not be judged. But oftentimes such malicious people accuse righteous men, wherefore they shall be cast into the everlasting fire of hell, where is wayling, weeping, and misery without end. But the righteous shall ascend to everlasting life. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

Tyrants and ungodly persons walke without knowledge of the truth, till they come to the Church of God: the wicked persecute the godly, but as they are preserved by the mighty providence of God, so they ought not to sleep in sin. A figurative speech of three severall meanings, *viz.* Take, Yeeld and Flee: the signification thereof.

The 42. Hiſtory.

THere dwelt ſometime in Rome a mighty Emperor named Dolphinus, which had no children ſave only a daughter, which was a faire creature, and well beloved of her Father.

As this Emperor rode on a day on hunting in the Forreſt, ſuddenly hee rode out of his way, and loſt his men, wherefore he was greatly diſcomforted, for he wiſt not whether he rode, nor in what place he was: till at the laſt, when he had thus riden all the day alone, in the evening he ſaw a houſe, and thither he rode a great pace, and knocked at the gate: immediately the good man of the houſe heard him, and asked the cauſe of his knocking, and what he would have? Dear friend, quoth the Emperor, loe it is night as ye may ſee, therefore I deſire you of lodging for the love of God.

When he had thus ſaid, the good man of the houſe, unawares that he was the Emperor, anſwered and ſaid: Good friend (quoth he) I am the Emperors Foſter, and have plenty of veniſon, and other victuall for you. When the Emperor heard this he was right glad in his mind, nevertheleſſe he told him not

that

that he was the Emperor. Then the Foster opened the gate, and received him as kindly as he could, and set him to supper, and served him worthily. And when hee had supped, the Foster brought him to his Chamber, and when time was he went to bed.

In the same night it befell that the Fosters wife did travell of child in another chamber hard by, and was delivered the same night of a goodly sonne. And as the Emperor lay in his bed, sleeping, him seemed he heard a voyce saying to him thrice, these words, Take, take, take. And with that he awoke, and marvelled greatly what it might be, saying to himselfe thus: A voyce biddeth me Take, take, take. What shall I take? And immediately hee fell a sleepe again.

And the second time, he heard a voyce saying unto him these words, Yeeld, yeeld, yeeld And with that he awakened again, & wondred greatly, saying unto himselfe: What may this signifie? First, I heard a voyce that said, Take, take, take, and nothing I received: And right now I heard another voyce that said, Yeeld, yeeld, yeeld: What should I yeeld?

And as hee lay thus thinking to him-

selfe, he fell asléep agam. And then hée heard the third voyce, saying these words thrice: Flee, flee, flee: for this night is a child borne, that after thy decease shall be Emperor. When the Emperor heard this, hee wakened, and wondred greatly what it might be.

In the morning following, the Emperor called to him the Fosser, and said: Dear friend, I pray thée tell me if any Child be borne here about this night to thy knowledge. My wife quoth the Fosser, this night is delivered of a sonne. I pray thée, said the Emperor, shew me thy Sonne. When the Emperor had séen the child, he saw a mark in the childs visage, whereby he might know him another time, and then he said to the Fosser thus:

Dear friend, knowest thou who I am: Nay sothly, quoth the Fosser, for I never saw you before this time, as farre as I can remember, nevertheless it séemeth that ye be a gentleman. Then answered the Emperor, and said, I am the Emperor your Lord, whom you have lodged this night: wherefore I give thée hearty thanks. This hearing the Fosser, he fell down upon both his knées at his fét and besought him of mercy, if that hee had offended his

Highnesse

Highnesse in any thing. Then answered the Emperor, and said, be thou nothing afraid, for I thank thee heartily for thy good cheer: and thy Son that was born to night, I will have to bring up in my Court, and shortly I will send for him.

O my gracious Lord, quoth the Foster it is not fit that such a noble Emperor should nourish the child of his subject and servant: nevertheless your will be fulfilled, and when your messengers come I shall deliver them my Son.

Then the Emperor took his leave, & rode home to his Pallace. And shortly after he was come home, he called unto him such servants as he trusted best, and said to them thus: Goe yee, unto my Foster, with whom I was lodged such a night in the Forrest, and receive of him his Son, of which his wife was delivered that night, and upon pain of death I command you that ye slay him by the way, and cast his flesh to the dogs, but bring with you the heart to me: And except ye fulfill my commandement, yee shall dye the cruellest death that can bee thought. Anon his Servants went to the Forrest, and received the Fosters son, and brought him with them, & when they were come near

unto

unto the Pallace, one of them ſaid: How ſhall wee doe that wee may fulfill our Lords commandement in ſlaying of this child? Some anſwered, and ſaid, that the child ſhould bee ſlain, and ſome would have his life ſaved, and while they were thus ſtriving among themſelves, one of them, that was moſt mercifull, ſaid unto the reſt: O my good loving friends, hear my counſell, I beſeech you, and ye ſhall not repent you thereof. If we murther this innocent Child, we ſhall greatly offend Almighty God: And behold hereby are young Pigges, kill we one of them, and then may we take with us his heart, and preſent it unto the Emperor, ſaying, that it is the heart of the young child. Then ſaid they thy counſell is good: but what ſhall we doe with the child? Good friends (quoth he) let us wrap him in ſome clothes, and lay him in ſome hollow tree, for peradventure God will help him, and ſave his life. When he had thus ſaid, they did after his counſell in all things, and killed a Pigge, and went their way and carryed home with them the Pigges heart to the Emperor, ſaying unto him thus: Loe, gracious Lord, we have deſtroyed the child as yee commanded us, and with that they

ſhewed

shewed him the Piggs heart. The Emperor supposing it had been the childs heart, took it and cast it into the fire despightfully saying: Loe, there is the heart of him which should have bin Emperor after me. Loe what it is to believe in dreams, which be but fantesies and vain things.

The same day after the Child was put into the hollow tree, there came an Earle to hunt in the Forrest and as his Hounds chased an Hart, they came to the hollow tree where the child lay, and when they felt the savour of the child, they would go no further. The Earle seeing this, marvelled why his Hounds abode there, and smot his horse with his spurres, he rode a great pace till hee came in to them. And when hee came unto the tree wherein the Child was laid, hee looked in at a hole, and saw there the child lying and then hee was right glad, and took the Child up in his armes full lovingly, and bare it home to his Castle, saying unto the Courteise his wife: Loe my dear Wife, this day by fortune I have found a very faire child in an hollow tree as I hunted in the Forrest, whereof I am right glad: And because thou never yet conceivedst

a child, therefore I exhort thee that thou wilt fain thy selfe to travell with child, and say that thou hast borne this child. The Countesse fulfilled gladly the Earles desire, and sayd. My most dear Lord your will in this thing shall bee done.

Not long after this, newes went throughout all the Countrey, that the Countesse was delivered of a fair son, wherefore every man reioyced much.

The Child began to grow and was well beloved of every man, and especially of the Earle and the Countesse. It befell when the Child was fifteen years of age, the Emperor made a solemne feast unto all the Lords of his Empire, unto the which feast this Earl was called, who at the day assigned, came and brought his Sonne with him, which was at that time a fair young Squire, and he carved at the bord before the Earle. The Emperor steadfastly beheld him, and espyed the token in his forehead which he had seen before in the Fosters house, wherewith hee was greatly moved within himselfe, and said unto the Earle in this manner. Whose Son is this: Certes said the Earle, hee is my Son. Then said the Emperor. By the faith that thou

owest

owest to me, tell me the truth.

The Earle seeing that hee might not excuse himselfe, but that needs hee must tell him the truth, told how hee found him in a hollow Tree. This hearing the Emperor, he was almost distract of his wits, for anger, and called to him his servants, which he had sent before to destroy the Child. And when they came before him, hee made them to sweare that they should tell him the truth what they had done with the child.

Gracious Lord, said they, wee yéld us unto your Grace and goodnesse, for pity so moved us, that wee might not destroy him, but we put him in a hollow Tree: what befell of him afterward, certainely wee know not, and in his stead wee killed a Pigge, and brought the heart thereof unto you.

When the Emperor had heard the truth of the matter, he said unto the Earle. This young man (quoth he) shall abide with me: the Earle immediately granted, though it was greatly against his will.

When the feast was ended, every man took his leave of the Emperor, and went whereas they list. And at that time it fortuned that the Empresse and her

daughter

daughter ſoiurned in another Country farre from thence, by the commandement of the Emperor. Not long after the Emperor ſaid unto this young Squire, it behoveth thée to ryde unto the Empreſſe my wife with my Letters. I am ready at your commandement my Lord, ſaid he to fulfill your deſire. Immediately the Emperor wrote Letters, the intent whereof was this. That the Empreſſe ſhould take the bearer of theſe Letters, and let him be drawn at the horſe tayle, and after that ſhe ſhould let him be hanged till he were dead, and that on pain of death. When the Letters were all ſealed, the Emperor gave them unto the young Squire, commanding him to ſpéd him on his iourney. And ſtraight way the young Squire put them cloſe unto a bor, and rode forth on his iourny. When he had ridden thrée or four daies on his iourny, in an ebening hee came unto a Caſtle where dwelt a Knight, and gently deſired of him a nights lodging.

The Knight beholding the ſwéet favour of the young Squire, made him good chéer, and afterward brought him into his chamber and when hee was there, he went to bed: and immediately fell aſléep, for he was full weary of

his

his tourny, and forgot his box with the Letters lying openly in his chamber.

When the Knight saw the box hee opened it, and found the Letters sealed with the Emperors sign Mannall, and was greatly tempted to open them and at the last hee opened them neatly, and then read how the Empresse upon pain of death should put the bearer of them to death, and then hee was right sorrowfull, and said within himselfe: Alas (quoth he) it is great pity to slay so fair and proper a man, and immediately after the Knight raced out that writing, and wrote in the same place these words following: Upon pain of death I command thee, that thou take this young Squire, bearer of these Letters, and let him be wedded without any delay unto my Daughter and yours, with all the honour and solemnity that can bee thought, and when they be marryed that ye make as much account of him, as if he were your own sonne, and that hee supply my rome till I come unto you my selfe.

When the Knight had thus written, he closed the Letters neatly, and put them into the box again. Early in the morning the young Knight arose, and very

very haſtily made ready, and toke his leave of the Knight and rode forth on his iourny, and the third day after hee came unto the Empreſſe, and ſaluted her dutifully in the Emperors behalfe, and gave her the Letters. When the Empreſſe had read them, anon ſhe ſent forth her meſſengers through the Country, commanding the States and Gentlemen to come unto her Daughters wedding at a day aſſigned.

When the day was come, thither came many great Lords and Ladies, and anon the young Squire eſpouſed the Emperors daughter, with great honor, according to the tenor of the Letters, & was much honoured among the people.

Not long after it befell, that the Emperor came into that Country, and when the Empreſſe heard of his coming, ſhee took with her, her ſon in law with much other people, and went to welcome the Emperor. When the Emperor ſaw this young Squire leading the Lady his wife, he was greatly moved within himſelfe, and ſaid: O thou curſed woman, becauſe thou haſt not fulfilled my commandement thou ſhalt dy an evill death.

O My dear Lord (quoth ſhe) all ỳ you commanded me to do, I have fulfilled.

May

Nay cursed woman said the Emperor, it is not so, For I wrote to thee that thou shouldest put him to death, and yet he is alive. My Lord, quoth the Empresse, you wrote to me that I should give him your daughter to wife, and that on pain of death, in witnesse whereof loe here your Letters sealed with your own Seal manuell.

When the Emperor saw this, hee wondred greatly and said: Is he then espoused to my daughter? Yes surely said the Empresse long agoe, with great solemnity, and as I perceive your daughter is with child. Then said the Emperor: O Lord Jesus, it is great folly to strive against thine ordinance, therefore sith it is so, thy will must needs be fulfilled. And with that hee took his sonne in law in his armes, and kissed him, which after his death was Emperor, and ended his life in rest and peace.

The Morall

This Emperor may betoken Herod, who would have slain the child Jesus, wherefore he sent messengers to seek him, according to the Scripture, shewing how he commanded three Kings to seek him, and bring him tidings again where he was, that hee might come

 and

and worſhip him alſo. The Foſter betokeneth Ioſeph, our Ladies huſband, which kept him: but when the three Kings came they ſlew him not, but worſhipped him on their knees, and left him in the hallow tre of his Godhead. The Earle that found this child, betokeneth the holy Ghoſt which warned Ioſeph by the Angel in his ſléepe, that hee ſhould take our Lady and her Son and flée into Egypt.

By the firſt take, may be underſtood the great benefit that he gave thée when he gave thée a Soul made to his own ſimilitude. By the ſecond take, is underſtood the ſonne of God, which was born of the bleſſed Virgin Mary. By the third take, is underſtood the ſame Sonne of God which dyed upon the Croſſe.

By the firſt yeeld, is underſtood that we ought to yéeld our ſoul unto Almighty God, as clean as he gave it us after our regeneration in Baptiſm. By the ſecond yeeld, that we ought to yéeld honour, worſhip, and love unto Almighty God, and man. By the third yeeld, that we ought to yéeld to God true confeſſion of faith, contrition of heart, and amendment of life. The firſt flee, betokeneth ſinne, which we ſhould flée. The ſecond

flee,

flee, betokeneth the world, which wee should flee, for the great temptations that are therein. The third flee, betokeneth everlasting pain, the which we ought to flee, through faith, by the which we may come to everlasting blisse: unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus. Amen.

The Argument

The soul of man being ravished by the tyranny of sin, she complaineth unto Christ, which heareth her. The Tyrant is overcome by Christ, who espouseth her unto him, preparing a place of perpetuall joy for her. Christ receiveth the patient sinner to his mercy by his death and passion.

The 43. History.

THere dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperor, named Santasinus, which ordained a law, that whosoever ravished a Virgin should die, and if she were rescued, then he that rescued her should have her to wife, if him list; and if he would not marry her, then she should be espoused by his appointment. It befell on a day that a Tyrant named Poncianus, led a Virgin into a Forrest and deflowred her of her

Mayden-head. And when hee had so done, he would have slain her, and as he was dispoyling her of her cloathes, there came riding by the Forrest a gentle Knight, which heard the lamenting of the Damsell, wherefore he rode a great pace into the Forrest to see what it might be. Now when hee came, hee saw a woman standing all naked, save only her smock, to whom the Knight spake: Art thou she (said he) that cryed so lamentably? Then answered the Damsel: Yea certainly, for this man that standeth here hath ravished me, and defloured me of my Mayden-head, and now he would slay me, and therefore hee hath dispoyled mee of my cloathes: for the lode of God, gentle Knight, help me now. Then said the Tyrant, she lyeth, for she is my wife, and I have found her in adultery with another man, therefore I will slay her. Then said the Knight, I beleeve better the woman then thee, for loe, the tokens appear openly in her visage, that thou hast ravished her, therefore will I fight with thee for her deliverance. And immediately they buckled both together and fought eagerly, till they were both sore wounded. Nevertheless the Knight obtained the victory, and put the tyrant to flight.

Then

Then said the Knight unto the woman: Loe, I have suffered for thy love many sore wounds, and have saved thee from death, wilt thou therefore promise to bee my wife? Thereto I assent, quoth thee, with all my heart, and thereupon I plight thée my troth. When they were thus ensured, then said the Knight as followeth.

Here beside is my Castle, go thither, and abide there till I have provided all things needfull for our wedding, for I purpose to make a great feast thereat. My Lord, quoth she, I am ready to fulfill your will. Then went thee unto his Castle, whereas she was worthily received: and the Knight went unto his friends, for to bid them to the marriage. In the mean while came Poncianus the Tyrant to the Knights Castle, and prayed her that hee might speak with her. Then came thee down from the Castle to him, and this Tyrant subtily flattered her, and said: Gentle Love if it please you to consent to me, I shall give you both silver and gold and great riches, and I shall be your servant, and ye my soveraign. When the woman heard this, full lightly she was deceived through his flattering language, and soon granted him to be his wife, and took

him to her in the Castle.

Not long after the Knight came home and found the Castle gate shut, and knocked thereat, but long it was ere he might have answer. At the last the woman came and demanded why hee knocked at the gate. Then said hee to her: O sweet Lady, why hast thou so sone changed thy love: let me come in. Nay surely, said she, thou shalt not come here, for I have here with me my Lobe which I loved before. Remember, quoth the Knight, thou gavest me thy troth to bee my wife, and how I saved thee from death, and if thou ponder not thy faith, behold my wounds, which I have suffered in my body for thy love. And so he unclothed himself naked all save his hosen, y he might shew his wounds openly. But she would not see them nor speak more with him, but shut fast the gate and went her way. Now when the Knight saw this, he went to the Judg & made his complaint to him, praying him to give right wise iudgement on the Tyrant and the woman.

Then the Judge called them both before him, and when they were come, the Knight said thus: My Lord, I ask the benefit of the Law, which is this: If a man rescue a woman from ra-

vishing,

wishing, ỹ relcuer shall marry her if him list, and this woman I delibered from the hands of the Tyrant, therefore I ought to have her to my wife: and furthermore she gave me her faith & troth to marry with me, and thereupon she went to my Castle, and I have bẽn at great cost against our wedding, and therefore as it semeth to me, thẽ is my wife by the Law. Then said the Judge to the Tyrant, thou knowest well that this Knight delibered her from thy hand, & for her love hath suffered grievous wounds, & therfore well thou wottest that she is his wife by the Law, if that him list. But after her deliverance with flattering spech thou hast deceived her, therefore I judge thẽ to be hanged.

Then said the Judge to the Woman likewise: O woman, thou knowest how this Knight saved thẽ from death, and thereupon thou betrothedst him thy faith and troth to be his wife, therefore by two reasons thou art his wife, first, by the Law, and after by faith and troth. This notwithstanding, thou consentedst afterward to the Tyrant, & broughtest him into the Knights Castle, and didst shut the gate against the Knight, and wouldest not see his wounds which he suffered for thy love,

and therefore I iudge thee to be hanged alſo. And ſo it was done, both the raviſher and ſhe that was raviſhed, were condemned to death, wherefore every man prayſed the Iudge for his wiſe iudgement.

The Morall.

This Emperor betokeneth the Father of heaven, which ordained a Law, that if the Soul of man were raviſhed from God, by ſin, the Sauer of the ſoul ſhould eſpouſe her, if him liſt. The woman that was raviſh'd betokeneth the ſoul of man, which was raviſhed by the ſinne of our fore-Father Adam, and let out of Paradiſe into the Forreſt of this wretched World by the Tyrant Ponicianus, which betokeneth the Devill, and he not onely defiled her, by leſing the heritage of heaven, but alſo hee would ſlay her with everlaſting pain. But the ſoule cryeth with an high voyce, whoſe cry our Lord Jeſus Chriſt heard. This cry was made when Adam cryed after the oyle of Mercy: and the Patriarks & Prophets cryed for remedy, ſaying theſe words: O thou the higheſt in the Eaſt, viſit thou us. &c. The Knight betokeneth our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which came from Heaven, and fought with the Tyrant, that is, the

Devil

Devill, and both they were sore wounded: For our Lord Jesus Christ was wounded in the flesh, and the Devill maimed in his Kingdome: wherefore the Woman, that is the Soul, gave her Faith and Troth unto Christ Jesus, when she became a Christian, saying these words; I forsake the Devill and all his pride, and believe in God the Father Almighty. Then ordained our Lord Jesus Christ a marriage betwéen him and her, with the two speciall Sacraments of Baptism, and the Lords Supper, whereof may be made a strong Castle against the Devill. Also our Lord commanded the soul to keep her still in the Castle of Vertu, till he went to provide that was needfull: that is, our Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven to prepare for her a dwelling place of everlasting joy, whereas we should dwell after the day of Judgment with our Lord God in honour and glory.

But alas, in the mean time came the Devill, and beguiled the wretched soul by deadly sinne, and so he entred into the Castle of our heart, which should bee the Castle of God. The Knight Jesus knocked at the gate of our heart, according to the Scripture, Loe I stand at the doore and

knock

knock, if any man will open, that I may enter. But where the Devill is, God doth not enter, except the sinner will receive him by repentance, which seeing our Lord hanging on the Crosse, that we may see his bloody wounds which he suffered for us, wee sinners should be the rather mindfull of his love For, from the crown of his head unto sole of his feet, was left no whole place: therefore saith the Prophet Esay, Behold & see, if any sorrow be like to my sorrow. Therefore hee is a wretched man that will not be converted unto his Lord God, but lie still in deadly sinne, wherefore when he is called before the high Judge, he shall be condemned to everlasting death. Therefore study we to open ỳ doors of our hearts by fruitfull faith in Almighty God, and then without doubt we shall obtain everlasting life. Unto which bring us our Lord Jesu Christ. Amen

The Argument.

The Body and Soul of a man being made (by Gods grace) the Temple of the holy Ghost, doe give themselves to serve and please God in this life, and to love God and their Neighbours according

ing

ing to his lawes: and though the body by death suffer mortall Affliction for a time, yet by Faith, Hope & Charity in Jesus Christ, both body and soul shall inherit life and joy everlasting.

The 44. History.

IT is read of a certain Roman Emperor, which erecting for himselfe a goodly Monument or Tomb, as the Labonters digged in the ground of his Pallace, they found a Coffin of gold bound about with three hoops, and upon the hoops was ingraven these words, I have spent, I have given, I have kept: I have had, I now have, I have lost, I am punished. That which I had I spent, That which I gave I have. When the Emperor saw this, hee called together his Nobles and States, and said unto them: My Lords, goe and consider among your selves, what this Inscription meaneth: Unto whom the Nobles shortly after returned this answer saying, That meaning of this Inscription is no otherwise but this: There was a certain Emperor your predecessor, which desired to leave behind him an example to others, that they might follow him in good life, and conversation, viz. I have spent my life in

judging

iudging others righteously, and governing my selfe according to the rule of reason. I have given, to my Souldiers things necessary: unto the poore maintenance and living: and to every one as to my selfe, according to their deserts. I have kept, in all my works, righteousnesse, mercy to them that need it, and to workmen their worthy wages. I have had, a liberall and a constant heart to every one which served me: I have given riches in their necessity, and loving favour at all times. I have had, a mind to tame and subdue enemies, to protect and defend friends, and to punish offenders. I have lost, foolishnesse, the friendship of enemies, and lust or lacivtiousnesse of the flesh. I am punished, now by death, because I beleived not as I ought to have done in one God eternall. I am punished I say, alas because I cannot redeem my selfe but by the merits of Christ Jesus the Saviour of the World. When the Emperor aforesaid heard the meaning of the inscriptions wisely interpreted on this manner, and how long that deceased Emperor had lived, hee thereby governed himselfe and his subiects more providently, and ended his life in Gods peace, with much honor.

The

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor may be called every good Christian man or woman, which ought and is bound to erect and re-edifie a Tomb, that is, his heart prepared unto God, that he may perform his will above all things: and so diggeth in the ground of his heart by contrition and sorrowfull repentance for his sinnes, that he doth find a golden Coffin, that is, a body dead to sinne, but his soul garnished with vertues, by Gods grace granted to the same, and bound about with three golden hoopes, viz. with Faith, Hope, and Charity. What then was ingraven in the same three hoops? First, I have spent: where it may be asked, what hast thou spent? The good Christian answereth, my body and soul in the service of God: if any of you bestow his temporall life so, he shall be assured of great reward, even of life everlasting. The second inscription is, I have kept. What hast thou kept? the good Christian answereth a contrite and humble heart, and prepared unto God, to do whatsoever his good pleasure was. The third inscription, is, I have given, what hast thou given?

given? The good Christian answereth: Love unto God with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my mind: and love unto my neighbour, according to the commandement of God. The fourth inscription is, I have had, what hast thou had? The good Christian answereth and saith, surely a wretched life because I was conceived in sinne, and borne in iniquity, and also was formed of vile and base matter. Fiftly, what is the inscription, I now have? The good Christian answereth, my Baptism, and thereby am made the souldier of Christ, by vertues which God gave me in my Baptism, where as before I was the bondslave of Sathan. Sixthly, what is that inscription I have lost? To this answereth the good Christian, surely the favour of God, by mine own deserts: yet all the sinnes which I have committed against God, I have by repentance corrected and amended: because repentance is one mean, but Christs merits chiefly and especially cleanseth us from all sin. Seventhly, what is that inscription, I am punished? The good Christian answereth and saith, Because I am afflicted by death for the offences and sinnes in my life. Eightly, what is that inscription

tion, I have spent that which I had? To this answereth the good Christian, saying, I have bestowed my life time here in the works of mercy, by ỹ grace which I received of my Lord Jesus Christ. Mindly, what is that inscription, That which I gave, I have? Surely in all my temporall life I gave all my counsell, whole assent, and will which I had, to be the servant of God, and now it is in the good will and pleasure of God, that I shall remain with him in the joyes of everlasting life in Heaven: unto the which Jesus Christ our Saviour bring us all:

Amen.

FINIS.